

Patient Instructions for Skin Testing

Allergy skin testing is done using the skin prick. Skin prick testing is accepted as the standard method for the diagnosis of allergic disease. Skin testing is not painful and is the most cost-effective method of allergy testing available. In our clinic, we use a plastic applicator to do the standard skin testing.

Skin testing can be done for environmental allergens, foods, some medications such as penicillin, and venom (bees, wasps, fire ants).

IMPORTANT: Certain medications must be stopped prior to allergy skin test. See below. Please call with any questions.

Please **do not** take any medicines (oral, lotions/creams, or nasal sprays) that contain **antihistamines** for approximately 7 days prior to testing. Common antihistamines include which you should AVOID:

- Loratidine, fexofenadine, cetirizine, diphenhydramine, Clarinex, Claritin, Allegra, Zyrtec, Atarax, Benadryl, Phenergan, doxepin or any store bought generic brands that contain the wording “antihistamine” anywhere on the label
- Decongestant/antihistamine combination medications.
- Astelin (generic is azelastine), a prescription nose spray antihistamine.
- Dymista also contains an antihistamine so should be avoided.
- Any over-the-counter allergy medicines or cold & cough remedies such as Deconamine, Dimetapp, Trinalin, Periactin, Actifed, Triaminic, or generic versions of these medications
- Any over-the-counter sleep aids for 72 hours – they usually contain sedating antihistamines. This includes medications like Tylenol PM and Excedrin PM.
- Some medications for dizziness and **anti-depressants** (tricyclic antidepressants) can also contain antihistamines. If you are on a medication of this class, ask your prescribing doctor for that medication if it is OK to stop.
- If possible, no **benzodiazepine** (such as Xanax) medications 7 days prior to test. If you are on a medication of this class, ask your prescribing doctor for that medication if it is OK to stop.
- Ambien should be stopped for 3 days prior to skin testing

You should **continue** to take as prescribed, the following medications:

- Antibiotics
- All asthma medications, including inhalers and other medications
- Oral steroid/prednisone – discuss with your doctor if you are on chronic steroid medications
- Prescription nose spray steroids, such as Flonase, fluticasone, nasonex, budesonide. **AVOID Astelin, Azelastine, and Dymista**
- Decongestants that are not combined with an antihistamine
- All of your other non-allergy medications

The procedure will take approximately 30-60 minutes for standard skin testing, and longer for more complex skin testing. These instructions do NOT apply to patch testing that is done over several days.