



SKIN TESTING PROCEDURE

What is skin testing?

Skin testing determines if you are allergic to environmental allergens, latex, foods, insect stings, or certain drugs.

There are two types of skin tests:

- **Prick/percutaneous/scratch test:** A tiny drop of a possible allergen—something to which you are allergic— is pricked or scratched on the skin of the back (usually for young children) or forearms. This is the more commonly performed test.
- **Intradermal test:** Using a small, thin needle, a small amount of the allergen is injected just below the skin surface.

If you are allergic to one of the substances tested, you'll develop a raised, red, itchy bump (wheal) that may look like a mosquito bite. The nurse measures the bump's size about 15 minutes after the skin is pricked.

Is testing safe?

Tiny amounts of allergens are tested on your skin, so skin testing is safe. The allergist will watch for any severe allergic reaction during the test, but it rarely happens.

Skin testing may be deferred in pregnant women at the allergist's discretion.

Certain psychiatric medications can also interfere with skin test results. Do NOT stop these medications without first discussing this decision with your allergist. The allergist can help the patient decide if an alternative method of allergy testing should be considered.

How do I prepare for the test?

- Your skin must be clear of rashes before testing. Please call us to reschedule testing if needed.
- Stop antihistamines for 3-10 days before the test (*see chart below for details*). **Please call our office if you have questions about which medications should be held or which may be continued.**
- Do NOT stop steroid medications, such as asthma medications, inhalers, nasal steroid sprays, oral steroids (prednisone, dexamethasone, methylprednisolone), or topical steroids.
- Do NOT stop other non-allergy medications.
- May continue oral medications such as:
 - Dextromethorphan (Delsym)
 - Guaifenesin (Mucinex)
 - Montelukast (Singulair)
 - Phenylephrine, Pseudoephedrine (Sudafed)
 - Certain reflux medications such as esomeprazole (Nexium), lansoprazole (Prevacid), or omeprazole (Prilosec). *See the chart below* for specific reflux medications to temporarily hold before skin testing.



What do I wear on the day of the appointment?

- Avoid one-piece outfits, so arms or back may be accessed. Consider wearing short-sleeved or sleeveless tops.
- Please keep your arms/back as clean and clear as possible.

WHEN TO STOP MEDICATION BEFORE TEST	NAME OF MEDICATION
10 days	Oral antihistamines <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cyproheptadine (Periactin) • Hydroxyzine (Atarax, Vistaril)
3-7 days	Nasal spray and/or eye drop antihistamines <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Azelastine (Astelin, Astepro, Dymista) • Olopatadine (Pataday, Patanase, Patanol) Oral antihistamines (can be in cold/flu/sleep medications) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acrivastine (Semprex-D) • Brompheniramine (in combination products) • Carbinoxamine (Dimetapp, Palgic, Rondec) • Cetirizine (Zyrtec, Wal-Zyr, Allertec) • Chlorpheniramine (Chlor-Trimetron, Triaminic) • Clemastine (Tavist) • Desloratadine (Clarinex) • Diphenhydramine (Benadryl, Nyquil, may end in -PM) • Fexofenadine (Allegra, Allerfex) • Levocetirizine (Xyzal) • Loratadine (Alavert, Allerclear, Claritin) Motion sickness pills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cyclizine (Marezine, Nausicalm, Valoid) • Meclizine (Antivert, Bonine, Dramamine) Anti-nausea pills: Promethazine (Phenergan)
24 hours	Certain anti-reflux medications (which are antihistamines) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cimetidine (Tagamet) • Famotidine (Pepcid)

PLEASE CALL OUR OFFICE IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS