



PATIENT INSTRUCTION/CONSENT INFORMATION FOR ALLERGY SKIN TESTING

Skin Test: Skin tests are a method of testing for allergic antibodies. A test consists of introducing small amounts of the suspected substance, or allergen, into the skin and noting the development of a positive reaction, which consists of a wheal (swelling) and/or flare (surrounding area of redness). The skin test methods are:

1. **Prick Method:** The skin is pricked with a needle where a drop of allergen has already been placed.
2. **Intradermal Method:** This method consists of injecting small amounts of an allergen into the superficial skin layer.

Interpreting the clinical significance of skin tests requires skillful correlation of the tests results with the patient's clinical history. Positive tests indicate the presence of allergic antibodies and are not necessarily correlated with clinical symptoms.

You will be skin tested to important Eastern Pennsylvania airborne allergens and some foods. These include trees, grasses, weeds, molds, dust mites, and dander and some foods (milk, egg, wheat, corn, orange and a few others). The skin test generally takes 1 hour. Prick tests will be performed on your back and intradermal tests on your arms. If you have a specific allergic sensitivity to one of the allergens, a raised, itchy hive (caused by histamine release into the skin) will appear on our skin within 15-20 minutes. These positive reactions will disappear over a period of 30-60 minutes, and typically no treatment is needed for the itching. Occasionally, local swelling at a site will begin 4-8 hours after the skin tests are applied (late phase reaction). This is particular to the sites that you where you had intradermal testing. These reactions are not serious and will disappear over the next week. They should be measured and recorded on a yellow sheet you will be provided. These should be reported to Dr. Murphy at your next visit. You may be scheduled for skin testing to antibiotics, caines, venom or other biological agents. The same guidelines apply.

PLEASE DO NOT:

1. No prescription or over-the-counter (OTC) antihistamines should be used 7 days prior to the scheduled skin testing. These include cold tablets, sinus tablets, hay fever medications, or oral treatments for itchy skin. Some of the names of these drugs include Acifed, Drixoral, Dimetapp, Dristan, Ornade, Benadryl, Rondec, Claritin, Trinilin, and many others. If you have any questions whether or not you are using any antihistamine, please ask Dr. Murphy or a nurse.
2. Medications such as over-the-counter (OTC) sleeping medications (e.g. Nytol) and other prescribed drugs, such as Elavil, Atarax, sinequan, Tofranil, Xanax or Paxil, that contain antihistamine active ingredients and should be discontinued 2 weeks prior to testing. Please make sure that the doctor and nurse are aware of the fact that you are taking these medications so that you may be advised as to how long prior to testing you should stop taking them.



Asthma, Allergy & Sinus Center

Andrew W. Murphy, MD, FAAAAI
Diplomates of the American Board of Allergy & Immunology

YOU MAY:

1. Continue on your intranasal sprays, such as Flonase, Rhinocort, Nasonex, Nasarel, or Nasacort. Astelin may be used up to 5 days before testing, then please discontinue use. Sudafed may be used temporarily but not the day of testing.
2. Asthma inhalers (Intal, Tilade, Proventil, Advair, Aerobid, Serevent, Maxair and oral theophylline [Theo-24, Uniphyll]) do not interfere with skin testing and should be used as prescribed.
3. Most drugs do not interfere with skin testing but make certain that the nurse and Dr. Murphy knows about every drug you are taking.

PLEASE LET DR. MURPHY AND THE NURSE KNOW:

1. If you are taking any Beta-Blockers or antidepressants.
2. If you are pregnant.
3. If you have a fever or are wheezing.
4. Any medication you are taking (bring a list if necessary).

Skin testing will be administered at our office with a doctor present since occasional reactions may require immediate therapy. These reactions may consist of any or all of the following symptoms: itchy eyes, nose or throat, nasal congestion, runny nose, tightness in throat or chest, increased wheezing, lightheadedness, faintness, nausea, vomiting, hives, generalized itching, and shock (under extreme circumstances).

PLEASE NOTE THAT THESE REACTIONS RARELY OCCUR BUT IN THE EVENT A REACTION WOULD OCCUR, THE STAFF IS FULLY TRAINED AND EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT IS AVAILABLE.

PLEASE DO NOT CANCEL YOUR APPOINTMENT SINCE THE TIME SET ASIDE FOR YOUR SKIN TEST IS EXCLUSIVELY YOURS FOR WHICH SPECIAL ANTIGENS ARE PREPARED. IF FOR ANY REASON YOU NEED TO CANCEL YOUR SKIN TEST APPOINTMENT, PLEASE GIVE THE OFFICE 48 HOURS' NOTICE. DUE TO THE LENGTH OF TIME SCHEDULED FOR SKIN TESTING, A LAST MINUTE CHANGE MAY RESULT IN LOSS OF VALUABLE TIME THAT ANOTHER PATIENT MIGHT HAVE UTILIZED.

I HAVE READ THE PATIENT INFORMATION SHEET ON ALLERGY SKIN TESTING AND UNDERSTAND IT. THE OPPORTUNITY HAS BEEN PROVIDED FOR ME TO ASK QUESTIONS REGARDING THE POTENTIAL SIDE EFFECTS OF ALLERGY SKIN TESTING AND THESE QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN ANSWERED TO MY SATISFACTION. I UNDERSTAND THAT EVERY PRECAUTION CONSISTENT WITH THE BEST MEDICAL PRACTICE WILL BE CARRIED OUT TO THE PATIENT (or guardian of the patient).

PATIENT: _____ Date: _____
(or parent/guardian if minor)