



Allergy Skin Testing

If your child is being seen for possible allergies, asthma, frequent infections or stuffy nose, allergy skin testing may be recommended. Testing can help find out what “allergen” causes the symptoms. It could be something breathed in, touched, or eaten.

How to prepare for the test

The visit may take 2 hours. Your child will need to **stop** taking medicines with **antihistamines before the test**. These medicines can interfere with allergy skin testing. For bee stings, the child should wait at least 6 weeks after being stung before being tested.

- Oral antihistamines – **stop** taking 5 days before appointment
 - Zyrtec® (cetirizine)
 - Claritin®, Alavert® (loratadine)
 - Allegra® (fexofenadine)
 - Benadryl® (diphenhydramine)
 - Atarax®, Vistaril® (hydroxyzine)
 - Xyzal® (levocetirizine)
 - Clarinex® (desloratadine)
 - Periactin® (cyproheptadine)
- Nasal sprays with antihistamine – **stop** taking 5 days before appointment
 - Astelin®, Astepro®, Dymista® (azelastine)
 - Patanase® (olopatadine)
- Eye drops with antihistamine – **stop** taking 2 days before appointment
 - Optivar® (azelastine)
 - Pataday®, Patanol®, Pazeo® (olopatadine)
- Heartburn or reflux (GERD) antihistamines- **stop** taking 2 days before appointment.
 - Zantac® (ranitidine)
 - Tagamet® (cimetidine)
 - Pepcid® (famotidine)
 - Axid® (nizatidine)
- Do **not use** skin lotions, creams, and ointments on your child’s back for a full 5 days before the visit. You may use these products in other places on the body.

Medicines that your child can keep taking that do not contain an antihistamine are:

- Nasal sprays including Flonase[®] (fluticasone), Nasacort[®] (triamcinolone), Rhinocort[®] (budesonide), and Nasonex[®] (mometasone).
- Asthma medicines
 - Singulair[®] (montelukast)
 - Xopenex[®] (levalbuterol)
 - Pulmicort[®] (budesonide)
 - Asmanex[®] (mometasone)
 - Advair[®], Symbicort[®], Dulera[®], Breo Ellipta[®]
 - ProAir[®], Proventil[®], Ventolin[®], Albuterol[®]
 - Flovent[®] (fluticasone)
 - QVAR[®] (beclomethasone)
 - Alvesco[®] (ciclesonide)
 - Arnuity[®] (fluticasone furuate)
 - Aerospan[®] (flunisolide)
- Oral steroids- prednisone, prednisolone
- Antibiotics

If you still have questions about which medicines your child can take, or if you do not feel he or she should stop a listed medicine before the test, call us at 614-722-5500.

How a skin prick test is done

A nurse will explain the test to you and your child.

1. Your child will lie flat on his stomach or you may hold him during the test (Picture 1).
2. The nurse will prick or scratch the skin on the back with a plastic applicator that has a little bit of the allergen in it. Any excess liquid from the applicator is wiped off the skin.
3. After the allergen is applied, your child can sit up and play until it is time to read the results in 15 to 20 minutes.
4. Your child's back may itch, but he must not scratch it.
5. A positive reaction looks like a mosquito bite. The test area may be red, itchy, and have a raised bump. The larger the bump, the more allergic your child is.
6. Sometimes the doctor may want to do more skin tests using a tiny needle and syringe. A drop of the allergen is injected into the arm just under the skin. A small raised bump (bleb) forms when these skin tests are applied. Like the skin prick test, the doctor will check for a reaction after 15 to 20 minutes.



Picture 1 The allergy test is done with your child lying down.