

Skin Testing Information Sheet

Your Doctor has suggested that allergies may be a cause of your symptoms. Therefore, an allergy workup and management program needs to be started for you.

The first step is finding out exactly what is causing your allergic symptoms. Some of the common causes are pollens (grasses, trees and weeds) and other inhalants such as house dust, mold spores, animal hair and foods.

The type of testing that your doctor has ordered for you is called Modified Quantitative Testing. This test is performed both on the lower inner arms, and on a portion of the upper part of the arm. It would be helpful if you could wear something with short sleeves or something sleeveless when you come in for your testing. You may want to bring something to read with you, as the testing usually takes about 1 – 1 1/2 hours.

The first phase of the allergy test will consist of several small “pricks”, which will allow a small amount of antigen to be absorbed on the surface of the skin. If your response is positive to the antigen, you will have a reaction that looks like a bump called a “wheal”. The final phase of the testing process will include Intradermal injections which consists of a small amount of diluted antigen injected under the first layer of the skin. This allows us to determine the degree of sensitivity. This also tells us which dilution we can safely treat you with if Immunotherapy is indicated.

There is a topical anesthetic cream available to help numb the skin if discomfort is a concern. We feel that this cream is helpful especially when children are being tested. We will give you specific instructions on how to apply the cream. We also recommend that you have some topical anti-itch medication such as Hydrocortisone cream on hand at home. Your arms may be itchy for several days afterwards.

Please be sure that we are aware of all of the medications you are currently taking. For your testing to be accurate, it is very important that you follow specific instructions for certain medications. Some medications, including eye drops and nasal sprays will alter the skin response. Please refer to the list on the back of this sheet to see if your medications are listed. Please pay attention to the number of days necessary to discontinue each medication before testing.

At the end of your testing appointment, we will provide you with a list of your allergies. We will also give you information that will help you understand your allergies and provide you with tips to help you control your environment and your exposure to the allergens. Your doctor will want to see you after you have been tested to review the results and discuss treatment options with you.

We recommend that you call your insurance company well in advance, before the testing, so that you are familiar with your benefits. Some insurance companies require pre-determination which can take up to several weeks.

If you have any questions or concerns about the testing or medications, please feel free to call the Allergy Department at (317) 926-1056 ext 303.