



NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

APPOINTMENT DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ TIME: \_\_\_\_\_

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## **ALLERGY SKIN TESTING**

### **Modified Quantitative Testing (MQT)**

#### **What is an allergy skin test?**

An allergy skin test, also called a multi-test, is used to identify the substances that are causing your allergy symptoms. The test is performed by applying an extract of an allergen to your skin, pricking the skin to allow exposure and then evaluating the skin's reaction.

#### **How is it performed?**

First, an allergy nurse will examine the skin on your forearm and/or back and clean it with alcohol. Then, a small, sterile disposable-pricking device is used to administer a drop of each potential allergen extract – such as pollens, molds, tree/weeds, and animal dander – into the outer layer of the skin. The skin prick is not a shot and does not cause bleeding.

Sometimes, in addition to the skin pricking method, a small amount of the allergen is injected just under the skin. If there are allergic antibodies in the skin, your skin will become irritated and may itch, much like a mosquito bite. This reaction means you are allergic to that substance.

#### **How long does the test last?**

Plan to spend about two hours for the entire appointment (including a visit with your doctor). Testing time may vary somewhat based on what you are allergic to and at what concentration of the allergen you become allergic.

#### **How can I prepare for the test?**

Inform the nurse who is going to perform the skin test about all medications you are taking, including over-the-counter medications.

Please refer to the backside of this handout to see which medications may interfere with allergy skin testing. Then, you should talk with your doctor about discontinuing any medications prior to the test.

Also, please refrain from using any body lotions or creams to your arms or back the morning of your test as they may alter the results.

It is best to wear a short-sleeved shirt the day of the test as the majority of testing is done on the arm.

#### **Will it hurt?**

The test may be mildly irritating, but most people say that it doesn't hurt too much.

#### **Is the test safe?**

Although small amounts of the actual allergens are introduced into your system, a skin test is completely safe when performed properly.

## What happens after the test?

The extracts on the surface of your skin will be cleaned off with alcohol. A mild cortisone cream may be applied to your arms to relieve any itching that may occur at the sites of the skin pricks. Keep the tested area on your arms uncovered when you go home.

You will then go over the results of the test with your doctor, who will work with you to develop a management plan specific to your needs. Some possible treatment plans may include: immunotherapy in the form of allergy shots or sublingual drops (drops placed under your tongue), avoidance measures, and/or medications.

## When should I call my doctor?

Call your doctor, or the allergy department, if you experience any of the following symptoms:

- **Fever**
- **Lightheadedness**
- **Wheezing**
- **Shortness of breath**

## MEDICATIONS THAT INTERFERE WITH ALLERGY SKIN TESTING

In order to ensure the most valid results of your allergy work-up, we request that you refrain from taking the following medications during the period indicated.

1. Do not take any **antihistamines** or cold preparations for **7 days** prior to your test. There are many drugs that include antihistamines. Some of the more common are:

Benadryl	Allegra
Claritin	Drixoral
Chlortrimeton	Rynatan
<b>Astelin (nasal spray)</b>	Sudafed
Comtrex	Hismanal
Contac	Tylenol PM
Dimetapp	Seldane
Dristan	Tavist
Zyrtec	Tylenol Cold & Allergy
Vistaril	<b>Patanol (eye drops)</b>

If there is any question whether or not a medication you are taking contains an antihistamine, please contact your doctor or pharmacist prior to testing.

2. If you are currently taking a **Tricyclic Anti-Depressant** or a **Beta-Blocker** (used to control high blood pressure), please call our office and let us know before your visit.
3. Antibiotics, nasal sprays (other than Astelin), Prednisone, and asthma medications will not interfere with testing.
4. Please stop the following antacids the day of the test: Tagamet (cimetidine), Zantac (ranitidine), Pepcid (famotidine), and Axid (nizatidine).
5. Some herbal supplements may affect the results of your skin test and will need to be stopped prior to testing. Please let the allergy nurses know if you use any of these on a regular basis.