



Skin Prick Testing

California – Fremont, Oakland, Redwood City · Idaho – Eagle · Oregon – Beaverton, Clackamas, Gresham, McMinnville, Newberg, Tigard · Washington – Bellevue, Fisher's Landing, Longview, Salmon Creek

What is Skin Prick Testing (SPT)?

This type of allergy testing is the most common and is relatively painless. A very small volume of certain allergens will be placed on your skin by making a small indentation or “prick” on the surface of your skin using a plastic device. Skin prick testing is used for IgE mediated food and environmental allergies.

What to Expect

After being “pricked” with the allergens, we will wait 20 minutes before we do a reading to find out what you are reacting to. If you have allergies, a little swelling that looks and feels like a mosquito bite will occur where the allergen(s) to which you are allergic was placed. The swelling is typically red and itchy.

How is the skin test read?

Your skin test may be read in one of two ways: 1) On a scale of zero to four 2) Precise measurement in millimeters of the wheal (W), or raised bump, and measurement of the flare (F), or redness. Your provider will use these results to determine the treatment plan that is best for your identified allergies. tests.

Medications to Avoid Before SPT

Do not take for 10 DAYS before testing

- Antidepressants: Tricyclic Antidepressants (TCA's): amitriptyline (Elavil), nortriptyline (Pamelor), and doxepin

Some other antidepressants can also act as antihistamines (i.e. Adapin, Deptran, Sinequan, Triadapin, Silenor). Let us know if you are on any antidepressants before skin testing.

Do not take for 5 DAYS before testing

- Eye Drops and Nasal Sprays:
Eye Drops: Bepreve, Elestat, Lastacraft, Naphcon-A, Optivar, Opcon-A, Pataday, Patanol, Zaditor
Nasal Sprays: azelastine (Astelin, Astepro, Dymista, Patanase)
- Leukotrine Inhibitors: montelukast (Singulair), zafirlukast (Accolate)
- Oral Antihistamines: cetirizine (Zyrtec), diphenhydramine (Benadryl), fexofenadine (Allegra), hydroxyzine (Atarax, Vistaril), loratadine (Claritin, Alavert), desloratadine (Clarinex), levocetirizine (Xyzal), chlorpheniramine (Chlor-Trimeton, Duravent-DA), ciproheptadine (Periactin)
- Other meds that may contain antihistamines: promethazine (Phenergan), pyrilamine (Midol, Pamprin, and other menstrual medications)
Combination Cough/Cold/Sinus (Advil, Tylenol, Sudafed, Actifed, Dallery, Dimetapp, Dimetane, Rondec, Tavist, Deconamine, Robitussin, Excedrin)

Sleep Aids (Tylenol PM, Nyquil, Zzzquil)

Motion Sickness Medications (Dramamine, Meclizine, Bonine)

- **Supplements:** large amounts of Vitamin C, Green Tea

Do not take for 3 DAYS before testing

- **Benzodiazepines:** Diazepam, alprazolam (Xanax), lorazepam (Ativan), clonazepam, temazepam (Restoril), midazolam (Versed)
- **Topical Steroids:** Triamcinolone, Hydrocortisone, Clobetasol, etc.

Do not take for 2 DAYS before testing

- **Antacids (H2 blockers):** famotidine (Pepcid), cimetidine (Tagamet)

This is not an all-inclusive list. Continue to take medications prescribed for other medical conditions, as well as plain decongestants, steroid nasal sprays, prednisone, and asthma inhalers. Do not stop any medication without checking with your provider first. Please contact the office if you have any questions or concerns prior to your appointment.

Beta Blocker Warning

If you are on beta blockers, then skin prick testing may have to be postponed. It is recommended that you continue your antihypertensive medications, however you may need cardiology or PCP clearance to hold beta-blockers for 24 hours prior to testing.

Skin Testing Risks

Typically, you will not experience any other symptoms besides the small hives where the tests were done, which go away within as little as 30 minutes. In rare cases, systemic symptoms can develop (hives elsewhere on the skin, cough, runny nose) and these symptoms will be treated if present. If your skin prick tests are negative, but your provider still suspects you might have allergies, more sensitive “intradermal” tests may be used in which a small amount of allergen is injected within the skin.

What is Intradermal Testing?

In some cases, if your skin prick test is negative, we may suggest intradermal testing. With intradermal testing, a small amount of the allergen is injected under the skin with a thin needle.

Reminders for your Skin Testing Appointment

- Review the provided list of medications to avoid before skin testing. If you are on any of these medications, please stop use within the recommended time frame.
- If you are on a beta-blocker or a medication that cannot be temporarily discontinued, consult with your provider before making a skin testing appointment.
- If you develop an illness or are experiencing an asthma exacerbation, please call the office to inform the medical staff. The appointment may need to be rescheduled to ensure your safety.
- Plan to be at the office for about 1 hour to allow for enough time to perform the skin test, read the results, and review the results and plan of care with your provider.

Clinic Locations and Hours

Visit our website at www.columbiaallergy.com to find your nearest location and to find our clinic hours.