

After 15 minutes, the nurse will check your skin for a reaction. There are two types of reaction:

- A positive reaction - The skin under the drop of allergen becomes red and itchy. A white, raised swelling called a wheal is surrounded by a red area. This takes about 15-20 minutes to reach a maximum size and then fades after a few hours. This means you might be allergic to the substance in the solution.
- A negative reaction - The skin under the drop of allergen remains normal. This means that you might not be allergic to the substance in the solution.

Please consult a specialist in allergy for further treatment if the reaction is positive.

Will the Skin Prick Test Hurt?

Skin prick tests may cause slight discomfort when the skin is pricked, but should not hurt like receiving an injection or drawing blood. Also, if the test is positive, the wheal may feel itchy. This will usually start to settle after 20 minutes.



Are There Any Risks?

Typical reactions include:

- red and itchy skin at the site of the test
- a wheal (a white raised swelling) can develop at the site of the test

Reactions from the allergens after you have left the clinic are rare. In general, any symptoms of an allergy are noticed soon after the skin prick tests. Local itching and swelling normally settle down within a few hours.

In the unlikely event that you feel unwell after skin prick test, please contact us immediately. If necessary, we can give you medicine straight away to control these symptoms.

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Service Hours

Mon, Tue, Thu & Fri: 9:00 am - 6:00 pm

Wed: Closed all day

Sat: 9:00 am - 1:00 pm

(except in the second and fourth week of each month, the Centre will open all day Saturdays)

Closed on Sundays and Public Holidays

Consultation by Appointment

For enquiries and appointments,
please contact us



Skin Prick Test



Skin Prick Test

This leaflet explains what a skin prick test is, what it involves and what will happen when you come to our clinic for the test. If you have any questions, please speak to a member of staff caring for you.



Why Do I Need a Skin Prick Test?

This test will help us to identify which substances you are allergic to. It can also help us monitor the progress of your allergies. An allergy is where your immune system responds to a substance such as food or pollen as if it is harmful. This can cause symptoms such as:

- a runny nose
- itchy eyes
- rash (such as hives)
- difficulty in breathing

What Is an Allergen?

The substance that causes the allergic response is called an allergen. A skin prick test (SPT) is an accurate way to test specific substances, to see if they cause an allergic reaction. It can test for food and aeroallergen allergies (those that cause hay fever-type symptoms). SPTs can also be used to help diagnose drug and venom allergies, including allergies to bees and wasps.

Are There Any Alternatives to a Skin Prick Test?

Yes. A blood test can be used to measure your allergic response to a specific allergen. However, a skin prick

test is quicker than a blood test. Results are seen in less than 15 minutes, whereas blood test results take about a week.

What Substances Can Be Tested?

The clinic is able to test for a wide range of aeroallergens, for example grass and tree, pollen, house dust mites, and animals. We can also perform skin prick tests for allergens, such as:

- milk
- egg
- soya
- a range of nuts
- a range of seafood
- chicken
- beef
- specific test samples

If you think you may have had an allergic reaction to any other food, you can bring a small piece of it with you to the clinic. The food should not be mixed with any other products, for example, sauces. It should also be individually packaged. So, bring a whole piece of fruit rather than a pre-prepared fruit salad. If the food is usually eaten cooked, such as chicken, please bring both raw and cooked samples.

If you can't bring the food you want tested with you, we can perform a blood test to see if you are allergic or not.

Before You Come to the Clinic

If you are taking antihistamine tablets (such as Piriton, Zirtek or Clarityn), you need to stop taking them before your test, as they may interfere with the test. Please stop taking:

- short-acting antihistamines (such as Piriton) - two days before the appointment
- long-acting antihistamines (such as Zirtek or Clarityn) - three days before the appointment

If you have an allergic reaction before your appointment, treat it as you usually would. Use antihistamines if you need to.

Please contact us if you:

- are unsure when to stop your antihistamines
- feel unwell when you stop taking medication
- have had to take antihistamines for an allergic reaction in the days before your appointment



We will also ask you to give verbal consent. This confirms that you understand what this test involves and agree to have it.

Performing a Skin Prick Test

A nurse will place a drop of the relevant allergen on your skin (usually your forearm or upper back). The skin under the drop of allergen is then gently pricked with a sterile lancet to introduce the allergen into the top layer of the skin. We can test for several allergens at your appointment. The nurse will repeat the same process for each allergen. He/she will make a different mark on your skin with a washable pen for each test. This means we can identify the different allergen tests.