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Medications and Allergy Skin Testing

Allergy skin testing may be performed in the clinic to help diagnose your allergies. The test relies on detecting the effects of histamine that is released by the allergy cells of the patient. Antihistamines are widely used to treat a variety of medical problems, including allergies, by specifically blocking the effects of histamine release. Thus, antihistamines must not be taken to avoid interfering with the results of allergy skin testing.

The effect of antihistamine medications last for a long time following discontinuation of these medications. It is recommended to **stop antihistamine medications for seven days** prior to your scheduled skin testing.

The following is a sample list of commonly used and prescription antihistamines that should be avoided:

Over-the-counter Antihistamines

- Benadryl (Diphenhydramine), Triaminic, Dimetapp, Tavist, Claritin (loratadine), Zyrtec (cetirizine), and Allegra (fexofenadine), for example
- Zantac (Ranitidine), Pepcid (Famofidine), Axid and Tagamet are antihistamines used to treat heartburn or GERD.
- Most “cold and allergy” preparations contain antihistamines, particularly those recommended for “Night” use.
- Many sleep medications and medications to prevent nausea and motion sickness (i.e. promethazine) contain antihistamines as well.

Prescription Antihistamines

- Oral allergy medications including Xyzal (levocetirizine), Clarinex, Periactin, and Atarax (hydroxyzine).
- Astelin (azelastine), Dymista, Astepro, and Patanase are an intranasal sprays that contain antihistamines.
- Many prescription eye drops contain antihistamines (Patanol, Pataday, Optivar, Elestat, Azelastine, Bepreve)

Prescription medications with potential antihistamine effects

If clinically able, please try to avoid these medications for at least one week before skin testing. Please inform staff on the day of your visit if you are taking any of these medications.

- Tricyclic antidepressants such as Amitriptyline, Imipramine, Doxepin, Seroquel (quetiapine), Zyprexa, Mirtazapine and others.
- Benzodiazepines such as Valium, Xanax, Tranxene, Librium and others

*****IMPORTANT*** Please remain on ALL of your other medications that will not interfere with allergy testing. A partial list of these commonly used medications includes:**

- Singulair and all of your inhaled or nebulized asthma medications
- Oral and intranasal decongestants including pseudoephedrine and phenylephrine.
- Guaifenesin
- Medications to treat GERD that are “proton-pump inhibitors” including Nexium, Prevacid, Dexilant, Aciphex, Zegerid and Prilosec.
- Antibiotics
- Steroids (oral and intranasal), including Solumedrol and Prednisone
- Melatonin
- Other “newer” classes of antidepressants (“USSRI’s”) such as Prozac and Zoloft.

If questions remain regarding any other particular medications, please contact the office nursing staff for clarification.