

Positive Reaction

A positive reaction will produce a red patch of skin with a white raised weal in the centre - like a nettle rash. This may also feel very itchy. The size of the weal varies in diameter and usually takes 10—20 minutes to occur.

The size of the weal is then measured.



The weal will usually disappear approximately one hour after the test. The area on your arm may remain itchy for a short while.

Very occasionally a small lump occurs over a positive test 12-24 hours after the test. This is not dangerous, and subsides inside a couple of days.

You can use antihistamine cream to help relieve any itch.

Useful websites:

Allergy UK: www.allergyuk.org

Tel: 01322 619 898

Allergy - General Overview:
www.patient.co.uk/health/allergy

Allergies -NHS Choices:
www.nhs.uk/conditions/Allergies

The Anaphylaxis Campaign
www.anaphylaxis.co.uk

For further information contact the
Respiratory Specialist Nurses
9AM-5PM
Lister Hospital: **01438 285621**

You can request this
information in a different
format or another language.

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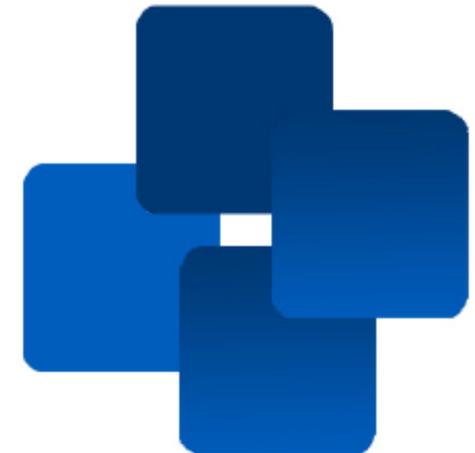
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Department of Respiratory

Skin Prick Test



What is a Skin Prick Test?

A skin prick test is a quick and usually painless procedure that can help to establish if you have any particular allergies.

The five main categories for allergy skin prick testing are:-

- House dust mite
- Animal dander
- Pollens
- Moulds
- Foods

(Food testing usually completed in a tertiary centre, and not currently at ENHT)

What is Allergy?

Allergy is the term used to describe a hypersensitive response by the body's immune system to a substance in the environment, such as pollens or food. In most people the body recognises these as harmless, however some people have a tendency to develop allergy.

What to do before the test?

- Stop taking all antihistamines (e.g Piriton, Clarityn) for **five days** prior to the test.
- Please avoid using steroid creams/body creams on your forearms.

Please alert us if you are unable to stop using your antihistamine treatment.

The Test

The forearm will be used for skin testing.

A pen is used to mark the skin and a small droplet of each allergen solution, including a positive and negative control, is placed next to the pen mark.

A small lancet is used to prick through the droplet to the surface of the skin.

The positive control is histamine. Histamine is a substance the body releases in response to the allergen. This will produce a red wheal, very similar to a nettle sting, and will cause the skin to itch.

The negative control is saline (salt water) and does not usually react with the skin.

Once the test has been completed, the surplus solution will be removed and you will be asked to wait for 20 minutes.

