












Allergy Testing

Today you will be having an allergy test. We can be allergic to certain things in the air or foods that we eat. When you have an allergic reaction you may have a runny nose, cough, sore throat, or your body may begin to swell and get puffy in some places. Having an allergy test will tell you what you are allergic to so that you can take medicine to prevent these things from happening. This hand out will explain how an allergy test works so that you will know what to expect.

<p>When you go into an exam room a nurse or Child Life Specialist will explain how the test is going to happen. You can see, smell, and touch some of the things that will be used during the test.</p>	
<p>First you will take off your shirt. You can choose to either put on a hospital gown that opens in the back or to simply sit with no shirt on at all.</p>	
<p>After you take off your shirt, the nurse will ask you to lie on your stomach on the exam room table. The nurse will also give you a pillow to rest your chin on. For younger patients the nurse will let you choose to either sit on the lap of the person who came with you, giving them a hug while the nurse does the allergy test or to lie on the table.</p>	

<p>When available, the Child Life Specialist will bring you activities and books to look at while the nurse is doing the test.</p>	
<p>The first thing the nurse will do is clean your back with a small, wet, cold wipe. This wipe has a strong smell, that some patients say smells like magic markers or rubbing alcohol. After your back is clean the nurse will dry your back with a soft cotton ball.</p>	
<p>The nurse will then take her tray of allergy drops and begin to place small drops of clear liquid that look like water in rows down your back.</p>	
<p>Once the nurse places a drop of liquid on your back she will take a small blue toothpick and count to three as she presses the liquid into your skin. Some patients say this feels like a small scratch, while others say it tickles. Depending on what you are being tested for the nurse may do this several times down your back, or she may only do it a few times.</p>	

<p>After the nurse is done with the blue toothpicks, she will take a washable marker and place a dot next to every spot on your back where she put the liquid drops. This helps the nurse to see and remember where she placed the drops.</p>	
<p>Once she is done with the marker, the nurse will use a paper towel to wipe the drops off your back. You can sit up and play or move around the room, while you wait for the nurse to look at your back.</p>	
<p>While you wait your back may begin to itch, but you can't scratch or touch your back for 15 minutes. You also cannot lean your back against a chair, the wall, or the person who came with you today. You won't be able to put your shirt back on, because if you do you may spread those drops all over your back. If you spread these drops it can make you want to itch even more. As you wait you can walk around, play games or look at books until time is up.</p>	
<p>Once 15 minutes has passed, the nurse will come back into the room and look at your back again; the doctor may come too. If you are allergic to something the place where the nurse placed the drop may begin to itch and look like a mosquito bite. When they are done looking at your back, the nurse will wash your back with warm soap and water this will clean your back and help stop the itching.</p>	

Then your allergy test is done!

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