Venom Testing Patient Information & Consent

Venom Skin Testing is used to determine whether you have an allergy to the venom of certain stinging insects. The purpose of testing is to determine whether you have venom antibodies that may place you at increased risk for a reaction if you are stung again. Venom from hornets, wasps, bees, and yellow-jackets will be used.

Venom testing begins with percutaneous testing, or scratch testing. During this process, the surface of the skin on the arm or back is pricked by a small pricking device containing insect venom. This will occur one time for each venom tested. The skin is then observed after 15 minutes, noting the development of any positive reactions. Negative prick testing results are followed by intradermal (ID) testing for that specific venom. During intradermal testing, an injection of a more dilute venom solution is injected directly under the surface of the skin, and again evaluated for positive reactions. Negative intradermal results are then tested again using a more concentrated solution of venom, and this will be repeated incrementally with more concentrated venom solutions until a negative intradermal result is achieved at the threshold amount determined by your physician.

Reactions and Interpretation of Results:

If you have a specific allergy to one of the tested venoms, a positive reaction will appear on your skin within 15-20 minutes. It may consist of a pink or red raised itchy bump, wheal, swelling, or a flare in the surrounding area of redness. This is caused as your body releases histamine into the skin, so it should appear similar to the histamine control prick that was also performed during the initial skin test. The reaction will itch at the site of the test and typically resolve within an hour after testing. Usually, no treatment is required for this.

Occasionally, local swelling may appear at the test site 4-8 hours after an intradermal test, but this does not usually happen with prick tests. These reactions are not serious and will usually disappear within a week. Large reactions may form a delayed response with persistence of the reaction or soreness that may last for a few days. The latter are not relevant for determination of allergies. Very rarely can a systemic allergic reaction occur that may vary from aggravation of rhinitis to even more rarely, anaphylaxis.

Location of Testing and Staffing:

Venom testing will be administered at Tidewater Allergy and Asthma with a medical physician or other health care professional present since occasional mild or very rare severe reactions may require immediate therapy. Talk to your doctor about any further details. Please let the physician and nurse know if you are pregnant. In general, allergy skin testing may be postponed until after the pregnancy in the unlikely event of a reaction to the allergy testing (the exception is testing for penicillin/ampicillin allergy and subsequent oral challenge to amoxicillin).

Medications to Avoid Prior to Testing: Because reactions that occur rely on histamine to detect an allergen, antihistamines and certain other medications should be stopped prior to testing. Please see the list below:

Stop Taking Before Appt 14 Days	Stop Taking Before Appt 7 Days	Stop Taking Before Appt 5 Days
• Periactin (cyproheptadine) • Remeron (mirtazapine)	• Claritin (loratadine) • Alavert (loratadine) • Clarinex (desloratadine) • Topical steroids on the back	• Allegra (fexofenadine) • Zyrtec (cetirizine) • Xyzal (levocetirizine) • ChlorTrimeton • (chlorpheniramine) • Antivert (meclizine)
Stop Taking Before Appt 3 Days	**The following medications can be continued:**	**Please continue all asthma inhalers and other health maintenance medications** such as blood pressure, birth control, and diabetes drugs. Some nausea, sleep, depression, and mood medications can interfere with skin testing, but it is not recommended to stop those.
• Benadryl (diphenhydramine) • Atarax or Vistaril (hydroxyzine) • Astelin (azelastine) nasal spray • Patanase (olopatadine) • Allergy eye drops • Over the counter cold and cough medicines	• Singulair (montelukast) • Flonase (fluticasone) and other nasal steroids • Sudafed (pseudoephedrine) • Afrin (oxymetazoline) can be used up to 3 days at a time • Oral steroid (prednisone) • Pepcid (famotidine) • Prilosec (omeprazole) • Protonix (pantoprazole) • Nexium (esomeprazole)	

Appointment Cancellation: Please do not cancel your appointment. The time set aside for your venom test is exclusively yours and special allergens are prepared it. If you need to change your skin test appointment, please give us at least 48-hours' notice. Due to the length of time scheduled for skin testing, a last-minute change results in a loss of valuable time that another patient might have utilized. If the office visit is cancelled without this 48-hour advance notice, a $50 rescheduling fee will be charged to the patient. This will not be covered by insurance. Placing a credit card on file is required to reserve the skin testing appt.

Will My Insurance Cover Skin Testing?

Insurance is a contract between the patient and the health insurance company, and our office only charges what is dictated by the insurance. As such, please call your insurance company to check on coverage. They determine the price, and what part of that price is the patient's responsibility. It is beneficial for you to ask them about the following code:

- 95017 (percutaneous (through the skin) and intracutaneous (within the skin) allergy test specifically for venoms)
- Max 29 pricks

Maximum out of pocket cost for 95017 prick tests without insurance: $10.00 per prick

If you have insurance, you will be charged the "allowable rate" which is determined by your insurance company, and which may be less than what is listed above. If you are required to pay co-insurance, you will pay a portion of the "allowable rate." If you have not met your deductible, you will be responsible for the full cost/allowable rate for your insurance until your deductible is met, but please contact your insurance company to confirm.

TIDEWATER
ALLERGY & ASTHMA

Venom Testing Consent

I (the person named below that is completing this form) am in agreement with my provider at Tidewater Allergy and Asthma to do testing for the patient named below, as deemed medically necessary. I understand there is an additional fee charge for this service. I also understand insurance will be billed for this service (if I have insurance) and I will be responsible for my copay, deductible, and/or any other amount not paid by my insurance.

Printed Name of Patient: _____

Patient's DOB: _____

Name of person completing this form (if not patient): _____

Signature: _____

Today's Date: _____

Witness: _____

Will My Insurance Cover Skin Testing?

Insurance is a contract between the patient and the health insurance company, and our office only charges what is dictated by the insurance. As such, please call your insurance company to check on coverage. They determine the price, and what part of that price is the patient's responsibility. It is beneficial for you to ask them about the following code:

- 95017: percutaneous (through the skin) and intracutaneous (within the skin) allergy test specifically for venoms. Max 29 pricks
- Maximum out of pocket cost for 95017 prick tests without insurance: $11 per prick

If you have insurance, you will be charged the "allowable rate" which is determined by your insurance company, and which may be less than what is listed above. If you are required to pay co-insurance, you will pay a portion of the "allowable rate." If you have not met your deductible, you will be responsible for the full cost/allowable rate for your insurance until your deductible is met, but please contact your insurance company to confirm.