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ALLERGY SKIN TESTING---THE BASICS

When you come to our office, your evaluation may require the use of allergy skin testing. This involves the application of small drops of environmental/food allergens using small plastic prongs to your arms (back in children). This procedure takes a few seconds to apply and approximately 15-20 minutes for a reaction to develop. You will only develop reactions to the allergens that you are allergic to. Your arms will likely get itchy...but it does not hurt! If your arms get too itchy, we will happily apply a topical corticosteroid and may even give you a dose of Claritin.

MEDICATIONS TO AVOID FOR SKIN TESTING

Allergy skin testing requires the use of both a positive (histamine) and negative (water) control. In order for us to see positive reactions (including controls), it is important that the patient does **NOT** take antihistamines for at least **5 days** prior to their visit/testing. This includes oral, nasal and ocular (eye) antihistamines. **Note: MANY OF THESE MEDICATIONS (ANTI-HISTAMINES) ARE OVER-THE-COUNTER OR ARE IN OTC MEDS!!!** Look at your labels carefully. A basic list of medications to avoid are:

COMMON ORAL ANTIHISTAMINES:

Claritin (loratidine), Zyrtec (cetirizine), Allegra (fexofenadine), Xyzal (levocetirizine), Clarinex (desloratadine), Benadryl (diphenhydramine), Chlorpheniramine, Brompheniramine, Hyrdoxyzine, Elavil (amtryptiline), Doxepin, Nortryptiline, Dramamine (dimenhydrinate)

COMMON NASAL ANTIHISTAMINES:

Astelin/Astepro (azelastine), Patanase (Olopatadine)

COMMON OCULAR (EYE) ANTIHISTAMINES:

Pataday/Patanol (olopatadine), Zatidor (ketotifen), Optivar (azelastine), Elestat (epinastine)

OTHER OVER-THE-COUNTER ANTIHISTAMINES:

Tylenol PM, Chlor-Trimeton, Unisom, Tylenol Allergy products, Dimetapp, **ANY over-the-counter medication that is used for either allergy relief or as a sleep aid**

NOTE: Nasal, oral and topical corticosteroid medications may be continued as well as topical/oral decongestants. Singulair and common asthma medications (albuterol, inhaled corticosteroids, bronchodilators) may also be continued. DO NOT HESITATE TO CONTACT OUR OFFICE WITH QUESTIONS!