

Allergy & Immunology

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What to Expect at a New Allergy Appointment

1. Like at any doctor visit, the doctor will talk to you and your child to get a history and also do a physical exam.
2. If allergy testing is needed, this is done by a method called “scratch” or “skin prick” testing
 - a. A small amount of liquid allergen is gently scratched on the skin of the back so that some of it goes just under the surface of the skin.
 - b. The allergens (tiny wet dots) are left on the skin for about 15 minutes.
 - c. We expect one scratch site to get a red, itchy bump, like a hive; and if your child is allergic to anything tested, each of those areas will also develop a hive. There is no significant risk of a severe (“Full body”) reaction.
 - d. Your child will not be allowed to scratch the spots until after the results are read at 15 minutes, but they are allowed to play, walk around, etc.
 - e. The results are known at the end of the testing
 - f. The itching and redness generally go away by the time you leave the office, and will not affect your child’s activities later that day.
3. Testing can be done to environmental allergens, such as grass, tree, & weed pollens, animals, molds and dustmites, as well as foods, medications, and bee venom, if necessary.
4. At the end of the visit, your doctor will go over any testing results and the treatment plan.
5. Another possible test, for children over 5 years of age, is a breathing test. This involves breathing into a mouthpiece connected to a computer, and is not painful or invasive.
6. The testing for medication and bee sting allergy is not typically done at the first appointment, but the environmental and foods are.