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## **ALLERGY TESTING PACKET INSTRUCTIONS**

Patient Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Appointment Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Appointment Time: \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Complete ALL paperwork within the packet.**

It is mandatory that the packet is complete and with you or already in your chart at the time of your appointment.

**2. In the case of a cancellation, we MUST have at least 48 hours notice.**

Allergy testing is blocked for a good one hour + of medical assistant and doctor time, it is essential that we have ample time to fill that block of time if you cannot make it.

**\*\*\*All Paper work must be complete and in the office at the time of your Allergy Testing appointment or you will be rescheduled.\*\*\***

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## **What to Expect at your First Appointment**

At the time that you make the appointment for your initial visit to Stone Medical, you should receive in the mail some forms concerning your medical and allergy history (if there is enough time before your appointment). Completing these forms and bringing them with you at the time of your appointment will help to expedite your visit. The first thing that will occur at your visit is that one of our trained nurses will take your vital signs (heart rate, BP, etc.), and may ask you to perform a breathing test if you have a history of asthma or other chest problems. You will then meet your medical provider who will review a thorough Allergic and Medical history and perform a physical examination. The provider will then discuss your diagnosis with you and create a treatment plan. If allergy testing is recommended, it will be done. If additional laboratory work or x-rays are necessary, these will also be ordered. Allergy skin testing usually takes about one hour to one hour and a half to perform, and the results are known immediately after the test is completed. Afterwards, you will have a conference with your provider to review the results of these and other tests, discuss a treatment plan, and schedule any follow-up appointments if needed.

## **What are Allergy Skin Tests?**

Allergy skin tests are often the best tests available for finding your particular allergies, or those of your child. What we do is “prick” the outermost part of the skin on the arm or back with a small device coated with different allergens. The prick does not draw blood. Then, we wait about fifteen minutes and see if there is redness and swelling, sort

of like a mosquito bite. Sometimes this is followed by a test with a small needle like a TB test. The provider uses the results of the test to guide the treatment. If you have allergies, your body is mounting a reaction against allergens. Any substance that can trigger an allergic reaction is called an allergen. To determine which specific substances are triggering your allergies, your provider will safely and effectively test your skin, or sometimes your blood, using tiny amounts of commonly troublesome allergens. Allergy tests are designed to gather the most specific information possible so your provider can determine what you are allergic to and provide the best treatment.

### **Which allergens will I be tested for?**

Your symptoms are probably caused by one of these common allergens:

- dust mites (tiny bugs you can't see) that live in your home;
- proteins from furry pets, which are found in their skin secretions (dander), saliva and urine (it's actually not their hair);
- molds in your home or in the air outside;
- tree, grass and weed pollen;
- cockroach droppings.

You will also be tested for a variety of foods. All of these allergens are typically made up of proteins. Allergy tests find which of these proteins you may be reacting to.

### **Medicines to Avoid Prior to Testing?**

With skin testing, many medicines can block the formation of redness and swelling in the skin. These medicines include antihistamines such as Claritin, Clarinex, Loratadine, Allegra, Zyrtec, Benadryl, Astelin, Tylenol Sinus or any over the counter medicines containing antihistamines. You must also be off any quercetin, nettle, butter burr supplements. Antihistamines and/or supplements need to be avoided for one week

prior to the test, as these medications will block the histamine receptors in your skin, and give a false negative test, which will then be unreliable and need to be repeated. Please do not stop any nasal sprays, asthma medications or other medications unless specifically mentioned by your provider. Patient must be off Prednisone or any oral steroid for one month. Please call us if you have any questions about medications and allergy testing.

**IF YOU ARE TAKING A BETA BLOCKER (HEART MEDICINE, ie.. INDERAL, PROPRANOLOL, LOPRESSOR, LEVATOL ), YOU CAN NOT HAVE SKIN ALLERGY TESTING. IF YOU ARE ON HEART MEDICINE DISCUSS THIS AT YOUR APPOINTMENT**

### **Reasons for allergy testing**

To help you manage your allergy symptoms most effectively, your provider must first determine what is causing your allergy. For instance, you don't have to get rid of your cat if you are allergic to dust mites but not cats, and you don't need to take medication all year if you have a seasonal allergy to ragweed. Allergy tests provide concrete information. And once you know the specific allergens causing your symptoms, you can try to:

- avoid exposure to the allergens;
- get specific medical treatment; and
- if necessary, consider specific vaccination with the allergen, or "allergy shots."

### **Which allergens will I be tested for?**

Because your provider is suspecting allergies, you know that one or more allergens is causing your allergic reaction-itching, swelling, sneezing, wheezing, and other symptoms. Your symptoms are probably caused by one of these common allergens:

- dust mites (tiny bugs you can't see) that live in your home;
- proteins from furry pets, which are found in their skin secretions (dander), saliva and urine (it's actually not their hair);
- molds in your home or in the air outside;
- tree, grass and weed pollen;
- cockroach droppings.

You will also be tested for a variety of foods. The most common food allergies are: Milk, Egg, peanut, tree nut, seafood, shellfish, soy and wheat. These are often referred to as "the big eight. They account for over 90% of the food allergies in the United States of America. All of these allergens are typically made up of proteins. Allergy tests find which of these proteins you may be reacting to.

### **What are specific types of allergy tests?**

**Multi- test** - These tests are done on the surface of the skin. A tiny amount of allergen is lightly pricked into the skin. If you have an allergy, the specific allergens that you are allergic to will cause a small reaction to occur in your skin. People with allergies have an allergic antibody called IgE (immunoglobulin E) in their body. This chemical activates special cells called mast cells. These mast cells release chemicals called mediators, such as histamine, the chemical that causes redness and swelling. With testing, this swelling occurs only in the spots where the tiny amount of allergen to which you are allergic has been introduced into your skin. So, if you are allergic to ragweed pollen but not to cats, the spot where the ragweed allergen scratched your skin will swell and itch a bit, forming a small wheal. The spot where the cat allergen scratched your skin will remain normal. Test results are available within 15-20 minutes of testing, so you don't have to wait long to find out what is triggering your allergies. And you won't have any other symptoms besides the slightly swollen, small hives where the test was done; this usually goes away within 30 minutes.

**Intradermal test** - This test is related to the scratch or puncture test, but is slightly more sensitive. It involves injecting a tiny amount of allergen under the skin, usually on the upper arms. Your provider may do this test when your reaction to the scratch test cannot be clearly determined. For children, a local cream can be applied prior to the test to numb the skin.

**Blood Tests** - Invitro blood tests may be ordered to check for IgE antibodies or another mayor group of antibodies IgG. This might be discussed with you.