

Patient information factsheet

Your appointment at the allergy clinic

Welcome to the allergy outpatient clinic. Please keep this document and read it again carefully a week before your appointment.

- If you are expecting a face-to-face appointment, please check that you know which hospital or clinic site you are attending.
- If you are expecting a telephone or video appointment, please check that we have up-to-date contact details for you. On the day of your appointment, we will try to call you in the morning or the afternoon, but it may not be at the exact time on your appointment letter.

What to expect at your upcoming appointment

A face-to-face appointment may take up to two hours in total, but only 15 minutes (or 30 minutes if it's your first allergy clinic appointment) of this time will be spent with a doctor. A telephone or video appointment will take up to 30 minutes in total.

During your appointment you may meet with:

- a consultant
- a registrar
- a GP with specialist interest
- a specialist allergy dietitian

If you have a face-to-face appointment, you may also have a skin prick testing session with a member of our allergy nursing team and/or some blood tests. If you have a telephone or video appointment, you may need to visit the hospital or your GP to have these tests.

Skin prick testing

This test may take up to 45 minutes.

An allergen is the name given to a substance that causes an allergy, such as food, pollen or animal dander (which is the name given to the old skin cells that animals shed).

Skin prick testing involves putting droplets of allergen solutions onto your skin, then pricking the skin through each droplet and waiting for 15 minutes. If the test is positive, a white itchy spot (also known as a wheal) will appear where the skin was pricked. The size of the wheal will be measured and recorded.

A positive result from a skin prick test does not always mean you have an allergy. Your doctor will discuss the results of the test with you on the day or afterwards by telephone consultation or letter. They will explain what the results may mean in your particular case. Your doctor may need to wait for other test results before making an individual plan for your care.

It is not always possible to perform skin prick testing, so you may need to have a blood test instead. We may ask you to visit the phlebotomy service at the hospital or your GP for this. Please do allow time for this if you have a face-to-face appointment.

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Medications

If you are having a follow-up appointment and we have asked you to have a repeat skin prick test, you may need to stop some regular medication that you may be taking.

If you are taking any of the medications below for epilepsy or severe mental health conditions, please check with your GP or mental health team before you stop taking them. If your GP or mental health team feels it is not safe for you to stop these medicines, please contact your allergy doctor's secretary. **Do not** stop taking the medications unless your GP or mental health team has confirmed it is safe to do so.

Please stop taking the antihistamine medications below temporarily for **two days before, and on the morning of, your appointment**, and stop taking the other medications below for **five days before, and on the morning of, your appointment** (unless you are advised otherwise by your GP or mental health team).

	Generic name	Brand name(s)
Antihistamines	Cetirizine	Zirtek [®] , Piriteze [®] , Benadryl Allergy [®] Liquid Release Capsules
	Loratidine	Clarityn [®]
	Fexofenadine	Telfast [®]
	Chlorphenamine	Piriton [®] , Allerief [®]
	Acrivastine	Benadryl [®]
	Levocetirizine	Xyzal [®]
	Desloratidine	Neo-Clarityn [®]
	Hydroxyzine	Ararax [®]
	Cyproheptadine	Periactin [®]
	Ketotifen	Zaditen [®]
	Promethazine	Phenergan [®]
	Alimemazine	
	Clemastine	Tavegil [®]
	Diphenhydramine	Histegan [®]
Sleeping tablets (sedatives)	Diphenhydramine	Nytol [®]
Benzodiazepines	Lorazepam	Ativan [®]
	Chlordiazepoxide	Librium [®]
	Diazepam tablets	Vallium [®]
	Diazepam rectal solution	Diazemuls [®] , Stesolid [®]
	Oxazepam	
	Temazepam	
	Nitrazepam	

(List continued on the next page)

	Generic name	Brand name(s)
Antidepressants	Mirtazapine	
	Quetiapine	Seroquel [®] , Sondate [®] , Mintreleq [®] , Zaluron [®] , Tenprolide [®]
	Amitriptyline	
	Clomipramine	
	Dosulepin	Prothiaden [®]
	Doxepin	
	Imipramine	
	Lofepramine	
	Nortriptyline	
	Trimipramine	
	Trazodone	Molipaxin [®]
	Mianserin	

You may continue to take all other medication, including:

- asthma inhalers
- nasal sprays
- montelukast
- any other types of antidepressants, such as:
 - Fluoxetine (Prozac)
 - Paroxetine (Seroxat)
 - Citalopram (Cipramil)
 - Escitalopram (Cipralex)
 - Sertraline (Lustral)
 - Fluvoxamine (Faverin)
 - Venlafaxine or duloxetine

You may bring any of these medicines with you to use before travelling home after your appointment.

Pregnancy

If you know or think you might be pregnant, please telephone us for advice as soon as you receive your appointment letter. We may have to postpone your skin prick test until after your baby has been born or arrange an alternative test.

Travelling to your appointment

If you are driving to your appointment, please allow plenty of time for parking. You may wish to consider parking further from the hospital, due to the pressures of on-site parking.

If you are using public transport, please make a note of any service delays or timetable changes or cancellations when you purchase your travel tickets.

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Contact us

If you need to change your appointment or update your contact details, or if you have any questions or concerns, please contact us on **023 8120 5844** (Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm).

If you are calling outside of these hours, you can leave a message on the answerphone. We will return your call the next working day.



University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust has been named as a centre of excellence by the World Allergy Organization.

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For help preparing for your visit, arranging an interpreter or accessing the hospital, please visit **www.uhs.nhs.uk/additionalsupport**

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