

The paediatrician and you have decided to run a series of allergy tests on your child. This leaflet gives you information about the specific tests.

## Types of allergy tests

- Test to find the cause of the allergic reaction using skin prick tests.
- Test for a reaction to the first dissolving immunotherapy tablet. (dust mite, grass or tree pollen).
- Test for hypersensitivity to foods using food provocation tests.

## Preparation

Your child has an appointment for one or more allergy tests. On this day, you and your child will be expected at the Paediatric Outpatient Clinic or Day Care Ward. You have received information about the exact time and location arranged from the outpatient clinic assistant.

If your child:

- Takes antihistamines (medication to relieve itchiness or allergies such as desloratidine, levocetirizine or cetirizine), this medication should be stopped 3 days prior to the skin prick test, food provocation test or the test with the first immunotherapy tablet.
- Has eczema or hay fever, it is important he/she has no symptoms and this condition is under control. If not, the provocation test may need to be postponed.
- Has asthma, the paediatrician will order a lung function test first before starting immunotherapy.
- Has had a prednisone booster for asthma in the 3 months prior to the food provocation test, this test should be postponed until the asthma is completely under control.
- Has been in contact with someone with a childhood disease or has a childhood disease him/herself, the day care admission cannot proceed.

## Description of the tests

### *Skin prick test*

The skin prick test is usually combined with an outpatient appointment with the paediatrician but can also be planned prior to a food provocation test at the Paediatric Ward.

After one or more tiny marks have been made just under the skin surface of the forearm, the allergen substance is applied, as well as two control drops. The first drop contains histamine and should always cause a mild reaction, which proves the test is working well. The other drop is a negative control and should not cause a reaction.

After 15 minutes, you can see to which of these substances your child could be allergic. The skin reaction is visible as a red wheal. The entire test takes about 30 minutes.

For this test, the following measures should be taken:

- 3 days prior to the test, **stop giving your child any antiallergy medication.**
- 1 week prior, **stop applying local corticosteroid ointments or creams** on your child's forearms. This is the test area. Examples of corticosteroid ointments and creams are hydrocortisone and triamcinolone.

### *First dissolving immunotherapy tablet*

Your child will take its first dissolving immunotherapy tablet at the Paediatric Outpatient Clinic or Paediatric Ward, under supervision of the paediatrician or paediatric nurse. Your child will learn how the tablet should be taken. We also need to know how your child reacts to the tablets. Should your child experience any symptoms, we can explain what is happening or administer medication if necessary.

Due to possible allergic reactions, your child is required to stay for 30 minutes. If your child has no allergic reaction and is able to take the tablet without problems, you can give him/her the tablets at home from then on.

### *Food provocation test*

At the Paediatric Ward, your child will be examined by the paediatrician or paediatric nurse. Your child will be weighed and its blood pressure and pulse will be measured. You may see some medication on the table; this is for emergency use should your child have a severe allergic reaction.

The test takes place from 8:30 to 14:00 (also for the double-blind cow's milk provocation test). The time of discharge depends on your child's reactions during the test. Sometimes more time is needed to observe your child well.

The test is usually performed in a double room. Both parents can stay with the child. Please take the following items with you on the day of the test:

- The food that needs to be tested. We only have peanut butter and chicken egg available.
- Your child's favourite pureed fruit snack. Breast milk and water are allowed.
- Your child's favourite toy or stuffed animals.

### *Double-blind cow's milk provocation test*

The cow's milk provocation test takes place during two separate day care admissions. The diet will contain cow's milk protein during one week and *no* cow's milk protein during the other week. We only have Nutrilon Pepti available, so if your child drinks a different formula/brand, please bring this with you.

## *Open food provocation test*

The open food provocation test will start by placing a drop/crumb of food in your child's mouth. This is repeated every 20-30 minutes, whereby the amount of food is gradually increased until your child has eaten a generous table spoon or drunk a 120-ml bottle. The food can be mixed with your child's favourite pureed fruit snack, so we advise you to bring this with you.

The paediatric nurse will keep an eye on your child during the test. The paediatrician or nurse practitioner is always close by. During this test, your child is carefully observed for signs of itchiness, rash, shortness of breath or tummy complaints.

If your child experiences symptoms while eating the food, he/she has an allergy. Depending on the severity of the reaction, the last amount of food given is given again or the test is stopped. If necessary, your child will receive medication.

After the test, your child may go home after 2 hours of observation, usually around 14:00. You will be scheduled for a phone call appointment with the Outpatient Clinic to discuss the follow-up care plan.

For this test, the following measures should be taken:

- 3 days prior to the test, **stop giving your child any antiallergy medication.**
- On the morning of the test, your child may have breakfast at home or the first bottle of milk but no food after that.

## **Location**

Take the stairs/elevator from the central hall to the first floor. There you will find the reception desk of the Paediatric Outpatient Clinic and the Paediatric Ward.

## **Questions**

If you have any questions or you need to postpone or cancel your appointment, please contact the Paediatric Outpatient Clinic by calling 020 – 755 7028 (option 3) or sending an e-mail to [kinderpoli@zha.nl](mailto:kinderpoli@zha.nl).