

## **Intradermal Testing (IDT)**

**Allergy skin testing** The scratch, or more accurately known as the prick-puncture test (one of the most common methods) involves placement of a small amount of suspected allergy-causing substances (allergens) on the skin (usually the forearm, upper arm, or the back), and then pricking the skin so that the allergen is introduced under the skin surface.

The skin is observed closely for signs of a reaction, usually swelling and redness of the site - a controlled hive with a so-called wheal and flare. Results are usually obtained within about 15-20 minutes, and several suspected allergens can be tested at the same time. A similar method involves injection of a small amount of allergen within the surface of the skin (**intradermal skin testing**) to test for allergies as a more sensitive version of the skin prick test is also used as a second step procedure in our allergy testing model. The test is used to identify if an individual is sensitive (allergic) to specific antigens such as molds, dust mites, animals or pollens. The degree of reactivity will determine the treatment recommended which may involve avoidance options to decrease exposure of known allergens, or desensitizing immunotherapy over the course of three to five years.

Severe reactions are rare, but skin testing does carry some degree of risk. Well trained Allergy Technicians (AT) work under the supervision of the clinic provider/physician. Generalized reactions may occur such as itching, nasal stuffiness, hives, wheezing, sneezing and shortness of breath. Emergency medications are always immediately available in the testing area. Rarely, hospitalization may be required if a true anaphylactic reaction were to occur.

There will be up to 30 different allergens tested. Not everyone is a candidate for skin testing. Individuals younger than 10 years of age, individuals taking Beta blocker medications and those with certain skin conditions are not eligible. Also, those with uncontrolled asthma should consider alternative methods of testing.

**Modified RAST can** be performed on your blood. The test measures the amount of Ig-E specific to each allergen. To perform a RAST we will require that a blood sample be drawn and send it to lab for analysis.