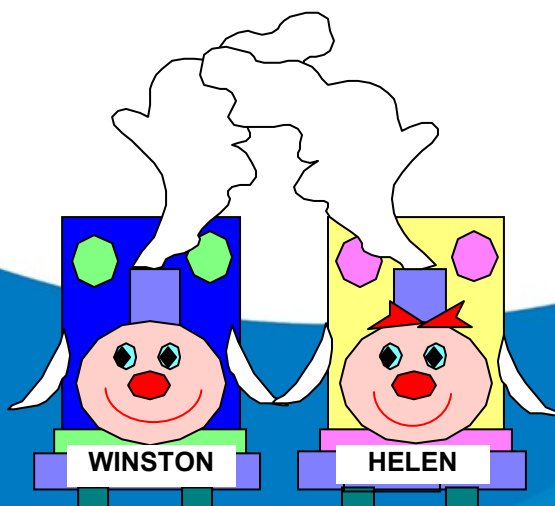


Blood Allergy Test: IgE & RAST

This leaflet can be made available
in alternative languages / formats on request.

*如有需要，本传单可提供其他语言/版式
此單張的其他語言/格式版本可按要求提供*

Na żądanie ta ulotka może zostać udostępniona
w innych językach/formatach.



The reason for the procedure & some important points to remember

Children often get an itchy red rash, allergy type rash and some mild oral lip swelling for a number of reasons and it is not always attributed to allergy.

Most children do not need to have an allergy test conducted. If the child has had a clear clinical reaction and the 'trigger' for the reaction can be easily identified an allergy test is not indicated. However the specialist looking after you or your child may carry out allergy tests to support their diagnosis.

Children under two years of age often give 'false positive' results due to their immaturity thus we do not usually perform allergy blood tests on children under the age of two years.

Children who have co-existing eczema can also give 'false positive' results. Thus interpretation of any allergy results would need to be carefully assessed if your child also has eczema. The specialist looking after your child will explain the test results to you in greater depth during the clinical review.

Unfortunately on occasion the 'trigger' for an event is not always identified and thus management can be problematic.

Blood allergy tests highlight 'sensitivity'. For example if your child has shown sensitivity to 'Egg' and they have had a clear clinical reaction to 'Egg' they will be classed as having an 'Egg Allergy'.

How is the 'Blood' allergy test done?

When a sample of blood is received in the Laboratory the Total IgE is measured. If this Total IgE is high this would indicate your child is 'ATOPIC' this is just a medical term that suggests your child has the predisposition to acquiring one of the many allergic type diseases such as Asthma, Eczema, Allergic Rhinitis or Food Allergy. The normal range of Total IgE is different for different age groups.

There is lots of support we can give you and your child in order to prepare for a blood test as we know this can be a scary experience for both.

Therefore do not be too concerned about this initial score. When looking at specific 'triggers' for reactions the specialist will request the most relevant allergen panel based upon the information you have provided during the consultation. The common 'food allergy' panels tested are:

Food Panel One (FP1) covers basic foods inclusive of:

Egg white, Soy bean, Peanut, Milk, Cod Fish & Wheat.

Food Panel Five (FP5) covers the mixed nuts inclusive of:

Hazelnut, Almond, Pecan, Brazil, Peanut & Coconut

A separate request must be made if the specialist wants to test for Cashew, Pistachio & Walnuts as these are not on the mixed nut panel. Other specific foods will also have to be requested separately.

For the majority of Asthma, Eczema and Hay Fever patients the 'Aeroallergen' panel should be requested which includes all the common allergen triggers such as: house dust mite, dog, cat, timothy grass & mould spores. If there is a 'specific animal' that has caused a reaction such as rabbit this needs to be requested as a separate request. Please take note that with allergies it may not have been the Rabbit itself which caused the reaction but the bedding from the rabbit hutch!

Most of the blood allergy test results listed above take about 7-10 days to come back and thus your specialist will be in touch with you when the results are available. The rarer requests may take up to 4-6 weeks to be reported as they are often sent away to a specialist laboratory.

The benefits of the procedure

Allergens that caused you or your child's reaction may be identified and thus allergen avoidance can be initiated.

What do the blood allergy test results mean?

The individual allergy scores will be reported on a scale of 0 to 6.

0 equals no sensitivity and 6 equals high sensitivity. This score does not however predict if your child will have a 'mild' or 'severe' allergic reaction it just informs us of how sensitised they are.

You may get some false positive results in children who have co-existing eczema. i.e. you may get a score of 4 to egg yet the child eats eggs every day without problem. This would be classed as a false positive result and the child should be advised to continue eating eggs. However, if your child has had a reaction to eggs and the score is 3 this would confirm the 'Egg Allergy' and your child will be advised to avoid eggs completely, suitable allergen avoidance information will be provided.

The risks & discomforts of the procedure

All effort will be made to ensure your child is not distressed during the blood test. See 'Having a blood test' patient information leaflet.

Alternatives to the procedure

It is possible that a skin prick test may be of benefit. However, you can test for far more allergens and rarer allergens with the blood allergy test. If a skin prick test is preferred this can be arranged via the paediatric respiratory nurses.

Consequences of not having the test

The allergen causing you or your child's symptoms may not be identified.

Further information is available at: www.allergyuk.org

If you have any further questions, please contact your child's consultant via their secretary via the hospital switchboard. The secretaries are available Monday to Friday 9.00 am to 5.00 pm

If you need to contact the Department outside of these hours, please phone either:

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