

INTRADERMAL TESTING

Intradermal Testing (IDT) is a battery of allergy tests performed in the office. A sample of a test antigen is injected just under the skin to form a wheal. A positive reaction is similar to a mosquito bite, with itching and swelling. The test is used to identify whether an individual is sensitive (allergic) to specific antigens such as pollen, mold, dust mites, animals, etc. The degree of reactivity will determine the treatment recommended which may involve avoidance measures to decrease exposure of known allergens, prescription medication to decrease the body's responsiveness during exposures, and/or desensitizing immunotherapy over the course of three to five years.

Severe reactions are uncommon but skin testing does carry some degree of risk. Experienced staff performs the test under a physician's supervision. Generalized reactions may occur such as itching, hives, nasal stuffiness, sneezing, wheezing, and shortness of breath. Extremely rare cases of shock and death have been reported in the medical literature. Emergency medications are always immediately available in the testing area. Rarely, hospitalization is required if a true anaphylactic reaction were to occur.