

## Children's Outpatients Department

# Allergy - Drug challenge (Antibiotics)

The drug challenge is done:

- to test whether your child is still sensitive to a particular drug, or
- to prove that an alternative drug, that your child has not had previously, is safe.

This will be done in a safe, controlled way. The drug challenge is carried out by exposing your child to increasing amounts of a particular drug, starting with a very small amount.

**The challenge will take place in the Medical Day Unit on Ward 16 at University Hospital, Coventry.**

## Observations

For the first 60 minutes of the challenge, a nurse with a paediatric life support certificate will be present. The nurse will be looking for signs of an adverse reaction. These are:

- Rash around the mouth
- Itchy rash
- Sneezing
- Vomiting
- Irritability



## Patient Information

- Wheezing or coughing
- Loose stool
- Stridor (croup-like breathing)
- Collapse

After the first 60 minutes, your child will be checked every 30 minutes. We will check for signs of an adverse reaction and check your child's:

- pulse
- respiratory rate
- oxygen saturation

## Stopping the challenge

If any of the signs of an adverse reaction appear, the challenge will be stopped. In the event of a rash, wheeze, stridor or more severe reaction, we will contact a doctor and the appropriate medicine will be given.

## The challenge

A skin prick test will be carried out using the drug to be challenged. If this test is negative, the drug will then be given by mouth.

- We start by giving a very small dose of the drug. We gradually increase the dose until your child has had the correct dose for their age and weight.
- The challenge takes about 2 hours to complete.

Your child will be observed for some time after completing the challenge. This time will vary depending on if your child had a reaction or not.

You will need to stay for at least 1 hour after the challenge is completed.

If the challenge is successful, your child will be given a 5-day course of the antibiotic to finish at home.

## Patient Information

### **On the day of the challenge, please bring:**

- A packed lunch for you and your child.
- A favourite book or toy

Please note that we do ask a parent (with parental responsibility) to accompany their child to this appointment.

### **Medicines to stop before the test**

Some medicines may interfere with the challenge. So, these need to be stopped for a few days before the test.

#### **Please stop:**

- **Short-acting antihistamines** such as Piriton, Phenergan and Vallergan, **2 days before the test.**
- **Long-acting antihistamines** such as Cetirizine and Loratidine, **5 days before the test.**

Your child can continue using all their asthma inhalers. However, if you are needing to use your blue inhaler more often, please email the allergy nurses for advice before attending your appointment.

Please speak to the allergy nurses if:

- your child is taking any other medicines
- you have any concerns
- you need clarification about the test and stopping the medicine

If the medicine cannot be stopped or you must give the medicine (like in the case of an allergic reaction), please speak to the allergy nurse. They can rearrange the challenge.

If your child has a cough, cold or high temperature, please let us know before you arrive. We may need to cancel the challenge.

## More information

For more information, contact 01788 663 189. Or email:  
[childrensallergy@uhcw.nhs.uk](mailto:childrensallergy@uhcw.nhs.uk)

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, please contact [childrensallergy@uhcw.nhs.uk](mailto:childrensallergy@uhcw.nhs.uk) and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke-free policy.

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[www.uhcw.nhs.uk/feedback](http://www.uhcw.nhs.uk/feedback)



### Document History

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