



Preparing for your child's Allergy Appointment

1. Check your appointment letter to see whether there will be any tests done on the day – skin prick or blood test. Also check if and when you need to stop giving any antihistamines before the appointment
2. If there are going to be any tests, it's a good idea to take along a comfort toy or blanket. It can be an uncomfortable experience for some children and the scratch tests don't come with a numbing cream so it can be a bit painful
3. Make sure you make a note of any recent reactions, associated dates and whatever may have caused it – along with any symptoms and treatments
4. Write down all your questions in advance and make sure you check it before the appointment finishes to make sure you have got an answer to them all before you leave
5. Most hospitals give out rewards for bravery – from stickers, to small teddies to Lego. However, you might want to take your own treat to reward any acts of bravery from your child
6. Bear in mind that your allergy appointment may not be in a dedicated allergy clinic, but instead in general paediatric outpatients. This means that there will be other children playing nearby and potentially eating among any toys and books provided for entertainment. Therefore, be vigilant if your child has a common and/or serious allergy
7. Take something to amuse your child as many clinics have the usual NHS waiting time coupled with seeing more than one person so it can stretch to a couple of hours. For blood tests, the numbing cream takes up to an hour to work so you may have some time to kill. Some clinics will let you go outside where your child can let off some steam during this time
8. If you are likely to have a long wait, take your own snacks/lunch. Don't rely on hospital cafés and vending machines to provide allergy friendly food

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