

Recommencing skin prick testing

Labtests will be recommencing allergen skin prick testing in the community commencing on November 15, 2021.

Originally we stated that we would be unable to offer this until we were at level 2, however with the new traffic light system we are planning to offer limited skin prick testing slots to:

- Patients aged 12 years and over
- Patients who need testing for serious allergic reactions to foods

Patients who meet the above two criteria can book their skin prick tests by calling the number on the request form.

We have suggested restricting requests to those over 12 years, as under 12s cannot yet be vaccinated against COVID-19. Skin prick testing is a hands-on procedure that takes a significant amount of time and occurs at a location where people with unknown COVID-19 infection may be present. Blood testing for serum specific IgE (ssIgE/EAST) can be used as an alternative. Starship also have very limited resources for on-site skin prick testing but can be contacted in serious cases.

At this time, specific IgE testing on blood (ssIgE/EAST) should be considered as an alternative for patients with reactions to aeroallergens and those under the age of 12 years.

Skin prick testing is not indicated for patients with food intolerances (e.g. migraines, isolated GI symptoms, non-specific rashes) or chronic urticaria. Requests that do not meet criteria will be declined.