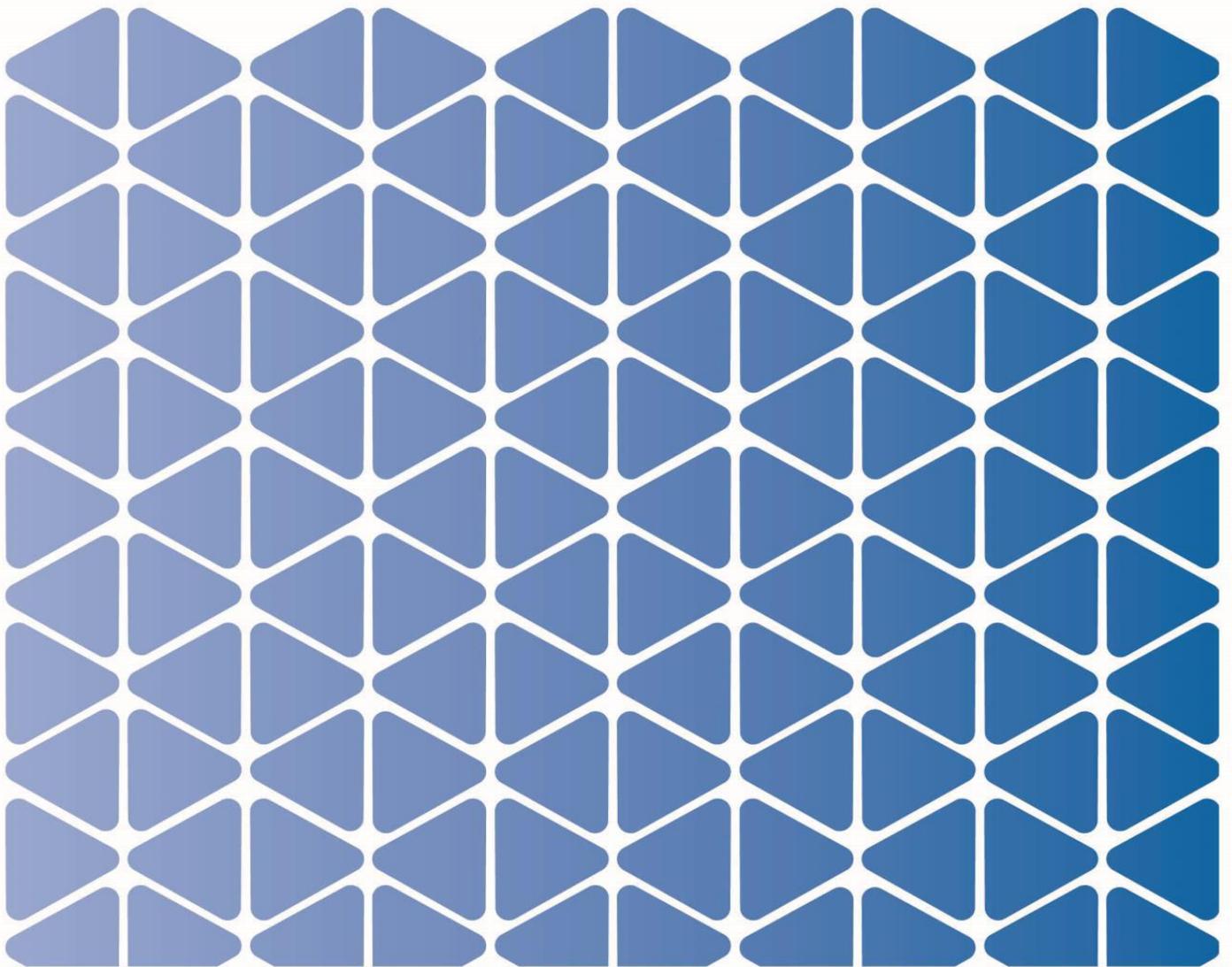




PATIENT INFORMATION

FOOD CHALLENGE TEST



It has been recommended that your child has a food challenge test.

This leaflet explains some of the benefits, risks and alternatives to the procedure. We want you and your child to have an informed choice so you can make the right decision. Please ask your Medical team about anything you do not fully understand or want to be explained in more detail.

We recommend that you read this leaflet carefully. You and your doctor (or other appropriate health professional) will also need to record that you agree for your child to have the procedure by signing a consent form, which your health professional will give you.

Benefits of the procedure

This procedure will exclude an allergy to a food. It is used when we suspect food allergy not to be the cause of symptoms.

Serious or frequent risks

There are few serious risks. We screen out patients we believe will have an anaphylactic reaction. Anaphylaxis has been reported in a small number of cases and is extremely rare. Persons with eczema may develop a flare of disease a few days afterwards if the allergen stimulates it but most children with eczema are fine.

Your child will be cared for by a skilled team of doctors, nurses and other healthcare workers who are involved in this type procedure frequently. If problems arise, we will be able to assess them and deal with them appropriately.

Other procedures which are available

There are no other procedures available to challenge patients against the purported allergen. We make an assessment before the challenge based on clinical information and possibly skin prick testing and /or RAST testing. This test is to prove the absence of allergy in a controlled setting.

Your child's admission to the ward

Your child will usually have been admitted to the ward. We will check your child's details and fasten an armband containing their hospital information to his or her wrist.

We will usually ask you to continue with your child's normal medication so please bring it with you but we will have asked you to refrain from any antihistamines in the 72 hours prior to a challenge as this may result in a false negative result.

Preparation

Unless your child is too young to understand you should tell them:

- why they are in hospital;
- that they will be given increasingly large amounts of some food or drink and that it is important that they take this even if they don't like the taste.

You should explain everything to your child in a way that he or she can understand.

- Explain that the procedure may help your child to get to eat a wider variety of foods.
- Encourage your child to talk about the procedure and ask questions.

Your child will not be staying in hospital overnight.

We have nurses who can explain things to your child and encourage them to talk through play and appropriate communication if required.

During the procedure

Your child will be awake all the time. If there are any signs of a reaction the nurse will check some observations like blood pressure and pulse and record these on a chart. They will also ask your child how s/he feels and if s/he has any itching, tingling or rash. If your child is very young we will the accompanying adult.

After the procedure

We will ask your child to stay on the ward for an hour after the last food or drink is taken. The nurses will continue to check observations. Your child will then be allowed home. Very occasionally a reaction can occur between 1 hour and 24 hours after the challenge but this is exceptionally rare.

Leaving hospital

Length of stay

How long your child will be in hospital varies from patient to patient and depends on how quickly we complete your child's procedure. Most children having this type of procedure will be in hospital for only half a day.

Medication when you leave hospital

If any extra medication is required for your child to take when you are at home we will arrange a prescription.

Convalescence

Most children have no problems on returning home. Very occasionally a reaction can

occur between 1 hour and 24 hours after the challenge has finished but this is very rare.

Diet

If you need to change what your child eats, we will give you advice before you go home and if necessary refer to a dietician to help you with this.

School

Most children will return to school that afternoon.

Outpatient appointment

No follow-up is arranged after a negative challenge unless there are other allergies requiring management. This appointment will usually already be arranged.

Contact details

If you have any specific concerns that you feel have not been answered and need explaining, please contact the following.

- Riverbank Unit Nursing Staff, Worcestershire Royal Hospital (phone 01905 760588)
- Ward 1 Nursing Staff, Alexandra Hospital, Redditch (phone 01527 512095)
- Day Surgery Nursing Staff, Treatment Centre, Kidderminster Hospital (01562 512384)

Other information

The following internet websites contain information that you may find useful.

- <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/allergies/>

If your symptoms or condition worsens, or if you are concerned about anything, please call your GP, 111, or 999.

Patient Experience

We know that being admitted to hospital can be a difficult and unsettling time for you and your loved ones. If you have any questions or concerns, please do speak with a member of staff on the ward or in the relevant department who will do their best to answer your questions and reassure you.

Feedback

Feedback is really important and useful to us – it can tell us where we are working well and where improvements can be made. There are lots of ways you can share your experience with us including completing our Friends and Family Test – cards are available and can be posted on all wards, departments and clinics at our hospitals. We value your comments and feedback and thank you for taking the time to share this with us.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

If you have any concerns or questions about your care, we advise you to talk with the nurse in charge or the department manager in the first instance as they are best placed to answer any questions or resolve concerns quickly. If the relevant member of staff is unable to help resolve your concern, you can contact the PALS Team. We offer informal help, advice or support about any aspect of hospital services & experiences.

Our PALS team will liaise with the various departments in our hospitals on your behalf, if you feel unable to do so, to resolve your problems and where appropriate refer to outside help.

If you are still unhappy you can contact the Complaints Department, who can investigate your concerns. You can make a complaint orally, electronically or in writing and we can advise and guide you through the complaints procedure.

How to contact PALS:

Telephone Patient Services: 0300 123 1732 or via email at: wah-tr.PET@nhs.net

Opening times:

The PALS telephone lines are open Monday to Thursday from 8.30am to 4.30pm and Friday: 8.30am to 4.00pm. Please be aware that a voicemail service is in use at busy times, but messages will be returned as quickly as possible.

If you are unable to understand this leaflet, please communicate with a member of staff.