No penicillin allergy

azdelta

Uw ziekenhuis.

Dear patient,

You do not have an allergy to penicillin. In this brochure, we tell you more about your incorrect allergy label. You will also be given information on the importance of correct labelling, penicillin and penicillin allergy.

1. No allergy to penicillin

The survey showed that you are not allergic to penicillin. Therefore, the label 'penicillin allergy' has been removed from your record.

2. Why was I labelled as having a penicillin allergy?

It is possible that you experienced a side effect of the antibiotics taken, such as a fungal infection, headache or gastrointestinal symptoms (acid reflux, vomiting, diarrhoea, nausea). However, a side effect is not an allergy.

Alternatively, you may have been labelled as having a penicillin allergy because a family member is allergic to penicillin. But allergies are not hereditary.

In either case, you are not allergic and can safely take these antibiotics. We removed the label 'penicillin allergy' from your record.

Facts

- 15% of all patients report having a penicillin allergy.
- > 90% of these patients are not allergic to penicillin.

Why is this?

- Many patients were labelled as having a penicillin allergy in childhood after showing a side effect caused by the antibiotic taken. A side effect is often mistaken for a true allergy.
- You can grow out of an allergy. If the allergy dates back more than 10 years, there is a chance that it is no longer an allergy.

3. The importance of a correct allergy label

Patients who claim to be allergic to penicillin are often given other antibiotics when they have an infection. These alternative antibiotics have several drawbacks:

- More side effects
- A higher risk of other types of infections
- It is often more difficult to treat the infection
- Higher cost
- Longer hospitalization

To ensure that you get the correct antibiotics in the future, it is important to be certain that you are allergic to penicillin.

4. What is penicillin?

Penicillin is a type of antibiotic often used to treat bacterial infections. This can be done through pills, injections or an infusion directly into the bloodstream. Antibiotics can be life-saving in some infections.

5. What is a penicillin allergy?

A penicillin allergy causes a hypersensitivity reaction in which our body's immune system reacts unnecessarily to penicillin. This may occur within hours of the first administration of penicillin or only after several days or after several administrations of penicillin. Hypersensitivity may be accompanied by a skin rash, respiratory symptoms or a drop in blood pressure. Sometimes, these reactions are life-threatening (e.g. when the throat swells).

A true penicillin allergy is not very common. Patients often suffer from gastrointestinal symptoms (diarrhoea, nausea, vomiting), fungal infection or headache. These are not allergic symptoms but side effects of the antibiotic.

These side effects can occur with all types of antibiotics, as antibiotics also kill the good bacteria that always live on and in our bodies. This gives other harmful organisms a chance to multiply and cause, e.g. diarrhoea or fungal infections.



Notes

Stop the incorrect label

Pass on the right message.
Remind your GP, pharmacy and other doctors that you are NOT allergic to penicillin and that you can safely be given these antibiotics.
This way, together, we are preventing the incorrect label from remaining in your record in other hospitals or with your GP.

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https://triaz.be/host/activiteiten-en-projecten/delabeling-van-penicilline-allergie

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