



LGH Penicillin Allergy Clinic

The clinic is overseen by Infectious Diseases specialists and supported by Vancouver Coastal Health Antimicrobial Stewardship ASPIRES pharmacist and LGH Medical Day Care staff.

LOCATION

Lions Gate Hospital
Medical Day Care
(across from cafeteria by 15th
street entrance)
231 15th St E,
North Van, BC V7L 2L7

CONTACT

Pharmacist 604-417-8921
Clinic Clerk 604-984-3822

Why am I referred to the clinic?

- Because you may not be allergic to penicillin!
- While ~10% of the population reports penicillin allergy, less than 1% is truly allergic.

You are not allergic to penicillin if...

- You experienced only nausea, vomiting or diarrhea, which are considered intolerances.
- You have taken and tolerated antibiotics from the penicillin drug class since your last reaction (such as amoxicillin, or amoxicillin-clavulanate).

Why is penicillin allergy de-labelling important?

- Penicillin may be the best treatment, especially for specific conditions or during pregnancy/breastfeeding.
- Alternative antibiotics may be less effective, contribute to drug resistance, or have higher risks of adverse reactions.

What can I expect from the referral?

- Initial phone assessment by the pharmacist.
- If eligible, in-person testing appointment at LGH Medical Day Care (Direct Oral Challenge or Penicillin Skin Test).

Direct Oral Challenge:

- Take an oral amoxicillin dose and be monitored for an hour.
- Immediate reactions (if any) are usually mild.
- The risk of a severe reaction is very low (1 in 200,000).

Penicillin Skin Test:

- Small amount of penicillin will be placed under the forearm skin, monitored for local reactions for 15 minutes. 99% accurate at ruling out potentially life threatening (anaphylactic) penicillin allergy.
- If appropriate, continue with an oral amoxicillin dose and be monitored for an hour.

What happens after the test?

- If you tolerated the oral amoxicillin dose, you are not allergic to penicillin. Your risk of developing a penicillin allergy in the future will be the same as anyone else.
- There is a small chance (~3%) you may have a delayed reaction (mild rash). If this happens, contact the clinic.