

Aspirin Desensitization

What is aspirin desensitization?

Based on the history and allergy test results your doctor has suggested that you have aspirin desensitization as part of your treatment at National Jewish Health. The purpose of aspirin desensitization is to induce a tolerance to aspirin in a person who is sensitive to aspirin. During the aspirin desensitization procedure you are given increasing doses of aspirin over time. Once the aspirin desensitization procedure is done you will need to take aspirin regularly.

How do you get ready for aspirin desensitization?

- Please follow your doctor's directions for pre-medication when getting ready for this test.
- Continue to take all the medicines as you usually do.
- If you are diabetic, please bring your blood glucose monitor and medicine, including insulin.
- If you feel sick, please call to speak with a nurse. We may need to cancel the appointment. The number to call is 303-270-2424.. If you have other questions regarding this treatment, please call 303-270-2424 and speak with the nurse in MIDC. MIDC stands for Minimally Invasive Diagnostic Center.
- Please check in at the Front Desk.

What is done during aspirin desensitization?

You will check in to MIDC East. You may bring reading materials, a laptop or tablet to use during your procedure. MIDC has wireless access for your technology devices. You may bring your lunch, or the nurse can order lunch for you from the cafeteria.

When you arrive the nurse will explain what will be done during aspirin desensitization. If you have any questions, please ask. You will be placed on a continuous vital sign monitoring system throughout your time in MIDC. The nurse will start an IV. The IV will be used to give medicine in case you have a reaction during the aspirin desensitization.

You will begin the aspirin desensitization by swallowing a small dose of aspirin. The dose will be increased every 1.5 to 2 hours during the day unless you have a reaction. You will be monitored closely by a nurse during the aspirin desensitization. Your doctor will be available to provide evaluation or treatment in case of any symptoms. Possible symptoms include shortness of breath, wheezing, nasal congestion and a runny nose. You may be given some medicine to treat symptoms if they develop.

Once the aspirin desensitization is completed your doctor will discuss the results with you, answer your questions, make recommendations and identify your daily aspirin dose.

How long will the test take?

Aspirin desensitization may take one to two days. You will come to MIDC East each morning and stay all day. You are closely monitored so you won't be able to leave MIDC East during the day. You will be able to leave for the night and return the next morning if the aspirin desensitization is continuing. You may need to stay longer if you have a reaction.

After the Procedure

Once the procedure is completed you will need to continue to take aspirin every day to remain desensitized. Your doctor will determine the right aspirin dose for you prior to discharge. Once you are desensitized to aspirin, you are also desensitized to all other NSAIDs like ibuprofen and naproxen.

If you go 48-72 hours without remembering to take your aspirin you will need to contact your doctor for further instructions about re-starting the medicine. Do not re-start it on your own without speaking to your doctor because you could have a reaction. If you have any upcoming procedures or surgeries, you will need to notify the doctor that you are on an aspirin regimen. You may have to stop taking it prior to the procedure.

Schedule a follow up appointment with either the asthma & allergy nurse practitioner or your provider within a couple weeks after desensitization.

How Do You Get to Your Test?

If you are being seen at National Jewish Health, please check in at the Front Desk and tell them you need to go to MIDC East. If you have questions please call 303-270-2424.

Visit our website for more information about support groups, clinical trials and lifestyle information.

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NOTE: This information is provided to you as an educational service of National Jewish Health. It is not meant to be a substitute for consulting with your own physician.

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