



# The Penicillin Allergy Clinic

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Dear Cardiac Surgeon,

As of September 2020, our clinic will begin testing patients in Winnipeg for true Penicillin/Amoxicillin allergy in an attempt to de-label all false allergies. Approximately 10% of patients report a Penicillin allergy of which 95% are false. This leads to unnecessary avoidance of Penicillin/Amoxicillin and sometimes Ancef/Cefazolin in place of more expensive broad-spectrum antibiotics such as Vancomycin leading to increased surgical site infections, increased intra-operative time, and increased length of stay in hospital. *Choosing Wisely recommends ALL patients with a Penicillin allergy be referred for allergy testing [1].*

Our de-labelling process is incredibly safe and requires only a few hours of the patient's time. Our process allows us to de-label low risk patients which is the majority of patients who carry a Penicillin or Amoxicillin allergy label. Any patients we deem higher risk who are unable to be de-labelled at our clinic will be referred to an allergist for further management. We do not offer skin testing as the most recent studies and guidelines state that skin-prick and intra-dermal testing are not required for a majority of patients who are at low-risk for a Penicillin/Amoxicillin allergy. There are numerous benefits to you and your patients by removing their Penicillin/Amoxicillin allergy such as...

## **Benefits to Patients by Removing Penicillin/Amoxicillin Allergy**

- 50% reduced odds of surgical site infection [2]
- Reduced Vancomycin use, minimizing delays to initiation of incision time in the OR [3]
- Reduced intraoperative time [3]
- Reduced length of hospital stay [4]
- Reduced risk of *Clostridium difficile* (35%) and MRSA (55%) [5]

## **Benefits to Healthcare System by Removing Penicillin/Amoxicillin Allergy**

- Inpatient costs savings were \$1145-\$4254 per patient when Penicillin allergy was removed [6]
- Average antibiotic costs per patient decreased from \$1,265.81 to \$592.08 USD, a 53% savings [7]

To provide your patients the best possible care and reduce healthcare costs, **please fax a consult to 1-888-736-1743 addressed to the 'The Penicillin Allergy Clinic'.**

Sincerely,

Dr. Norm Silver, FRCPC  
Pediatrician/Emergency Physician

Dr. Taft Micks, CCFP(EM)  
Family/Emergency Physician

### **References**

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6. Mattingly II TJ, Fulton A, Lumish RA, Williams AMC, Yoon SJ, Yuen M, et al. The Cost of Self-Reported Penicillin Allergy: A Systematic Review. *J Allergy Clin Immunol Pract* 2018;6:1649-54
7. Chen JR, Tarver SA, Alvarez KS, Wei W, Khan DA. Improving aztreonam stewardship and cost through a penicillin allergy testing clinical guideline. *Open Forum Infect Dis*. 2018 May 5;5(6)