

Your Pregnancy Journey: Talking About Medication Allergies

Why

Many people who think they're allergic to penicillin actually aren't. Confirming this during pregnancy helps doctors give you the safest medications—for you and your baby.

1. Prenatal Care Appointments

- Your doctor or maternity clinic asks about any allergies you have—especially to medications like penicillin.

Opportunities

- Schedule allergy testing if needed
- Get the safest antibiotics ready ahead of time

Challenges

- Not enough time in visits
- Different providers ask different questions



You'll be asked:

- What symptoms you had
- How soon they appeared
- Whether you've taken antibiotics since
- If you've seen an allergist



This is the best time to clarify allergy information before delivery.



At a scheduled allergy test Your doctor may want to know:

- What caused your reaction
- How serious it was
- If you've had any treatments for it
- If anyone in your family has allergies

3. Hospital Admission

2. GBS Testing (Week 36–38)



- When you arrive at the hospital, nurses and doctors will ask again about your allergies.
- They check your records or ask you directly.



• Group B Streptococcus (GBS) Assessment:

- Around 36 weeks, your doctor will do a simple swab to check for GBS, a common infection during pregnancy.
- If you've mentioned a penicillin allergy, they'll talk with you and may suggest extra testing to help keep you and your baby safe.

Opportunities

- Clear allergy info helps your team act fast
- Supports safe decisions about antibiotics

Challenges

- Allergy notes may be incomplete or unclear
- Allergy info might be on paper or missed

4. Labour & Delivery



- You're officially in labour, and medications may be needed—especially antibiotics.
- Your allergy status helps guide safe decisions.

Opportunities

- Accurate allergy info makes it easier to choose the right antibiotic.
- If your allergy label is incorrect, you might get the wrong medicine—so confirming it early matters

Challenges

- If allergy details are missing or confusing, care might be delayed or less safe.

What You Can Do:

- Don't hesitate to ask: **"Can we double-check my allergy history?"**
- If you're not sure about a past reaction, say so—it helps your team make the best choices.