



Allergy Medications and Saliva Cortisol

Corticosteroids and certain allergy medications containing pseudoephedrine or phenylephrine may affect cortisol levels or the body's stress response, potentially influencing salivary cortisol test results. Avoiding these medications before sample collection helps ensure a more accurate assessment of natural cortisol secretion. *Patients: Never discontinue medications without first consulting your physician.*

Medications That Should Be Avoided Before Collection

Corticosteroid-Containing Medications: avoid 4–5 days before saliva collection

Products containing corticosteroids may interfere with cortisol results and should be discontinued for 4–5 days before saliva collection, if clinically appropriate.

Examples include:

Nasal Sprays:

- Rhinocort® (budesonide)
- Nasacort® (triamcinolone acetonide)
- Flonase Allergy Relief® (fluticasone propionate)
- Flonase Sensimist® (fluticasone furoate)

Asthma inhalers:

- Flovent® (fluticasone)
- Pulmicort® (budesonide)
- QVAR® (beclomethasone)
- Asmanex® (mometasone)
- Alvesco® (ciclesonide)
- Arnuity Ellipta® (fluticasone furoate)

Also Avoid Topicals:

- Corticosteroid creams and ointments
- Corticosteroid eye drops
- Corticosteroid ear drops
- Pet Medications - corticosteroid products administered to pets could also contribute to contamination



Health Disclaimer: All information given about health conditions, treatments, products and dosages are not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment.



Decongestants Containing Pseudoephedrine and Phenylephrine: avoid for at least 24 hours before the start of saliva collection.

Products containing pseudoephedrine or phenylephrine may theoretically affect cortisol levels through their stimulant/decongestant effects. These products are commonly used as allergy nasal sprays and are kept behind the pharmacy counter requiring a request from the pharmacist.

Patients should allow **at least 24 hours between their last dose and the start of saliva collection.**

Examples include:

- Allegra-D®
- Claritin-D®
- Zyrtec-D®
- Sudafed®

Medications That Are Generally Acceptable

Standard antihistamines that do not contain corticosteroids, pseudoephedrine, or phenylephrine may be used as usual in the morning after AM saliva collections are complete, as with all other medications not listed here.

Examples include:

- Allegra® (fexofenadine)
- Claritin® (loratadine)
- Zyrtec® (cetirizine)

