

Antibiotic Allergies¹

Sample Responses to Patient Portal Messages

The following are examples of asynchronous messages (e.g., MyChart messages) received by telemedicine clinicians for patients around antibiotic allergies. The responses below assume the clinician is responding to the patient or the patient's family member. Patients and family members should be strongly discouraged from sending asynchronous messages for urgent concerns.

Responses Intended for Adult Patients

- **“I had a reaction to penicillin. Should I avoid penicillin?”**
 - **Possible response:** “Thank you for your question. Allergies to antibiotics are not passed down through families.¹ As long as you have not had a reaction to penicillin, penicillin and related antibiotics are safe to take. If you do have a personal history of reacting to penicillin, please let me know so that we can evaluate you further.”
- **“I had nausea and vomiting after taking amoxicillin some years ago. Are there any precautions around taking amoxicillin again?”**
 - **Possible response:** “Thank you for your question. Some people feel nauseous when they take medications such as antibiotics. However, nausea and vomiting without other symptoms like new rashes, lip swelling, or difficulty breathing are unlikely to represent an allergy to amoxicillin.¹ You can prevent nausea and vomiting related to antibiotics by taking amoxicillin with food, following a bland diet, and avoiding other things (such as caffeine or alcohol) that can also cause nausea. It is also best to sit upright for 30 minutes after taking the antibiotic.”
- **“I was told that I no longer have a penicillin allergy. What should I tell my other doctors/healthcare professionals?”**
 - **Possible response:** “It is great that you no longer have a penicillin allergy. Be sure to tell your other clinicians—including pharmacists—that you are not allergic to penicillin. Ask them to include this information in your medical records and remove the allergy from the medical record if the information is still there. You may need to tell multiple clinicians this same information as sometimes medical records can pull outdated information from other sources such as pharmacies.”

Responses Intended for the Family Members of Pediatric Patients

- **“My child's family member had a reaction to penicillin. Should my child avoid penicillin?”**
 - **Possible response:** “Thank you for your question. Allergies to antibiotics are not passed down through families.¹ As long as your child has not had a reaction to penicillin, penicillin and related antibiotics are safe to take. If your child does have

a personal history of reacting to penicillin, please let me know so that we can evaluate your child further.”

- **“My child had nausea and vomiting after taking amoxicillin a few years ago. Are there any precautions around taking amoxicillin again?”**
 - **Possible response:** “Thank you for your question. Some people feel nauseous when they take medications such as antibiotics. However, nausea and vomiting without other symptoms like new rashes, lip swelling, or difficulty breathing are unlikely to represent an allergy to amoxicillin.¹ You can prevent nausea and vomiting related to antibiotics by having your child take amoxicillin with food, follow a bland diet, and avoid other things (such as caffeine) that can also cause nausea. It is also best to have the child sit upright for 30 minutes after taking the antibiotic.”
- **“I was told that my child no longer has a penicillin allergy. What should I tell their other doctors/healthcare professionals?”**
 - **Possible response:** “It is great that your child no longer has a penicillin allergy. Be sure to tell their other clinicians—including pharmacists—that your child is not allergic to penicillin. Ask them to include this information in your child’s medical records and remove the allergy from the medical record if the information is still there. You may need to tell multiple clinicians this same information as sometimes medical records can pull outdated information from other sources such as pharmacies.”

References

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Clinical features of penicillin allergy. August 25, 2025. <https://www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use/hcp/clinical-signs/index.html>. Accessed March 17, 2026.

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