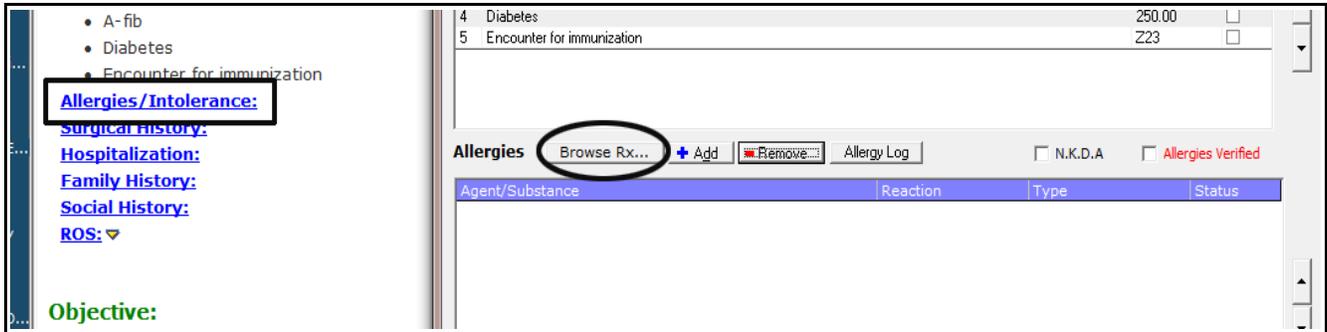# ECW How To
Enter/Updating Allergies

What I plan to do in this "How To" is go over the recommended method of entering an allergy – and to demonstrate one workflow (which I am using) to correct non-functioning allergies.


Start in the progress note of the patient, or from the right panel in the Hub or Telephone Encounter. Choose the "Allergy/Intolerance" section, then choose the "Browse Rx..." button. ALL drug allergies should be entered in the structured fields by using the "Browse Rx..." button. NEVER enter a drug allergy using free text – ECW has no way of knowing what that free text entry is, and you will never be alerted about any interactions with a free text entry.

ALSO – VERY IMPORTANT – make sure when entering an allergy that you use ONLY "MedispanRx" choices. This can be seen in the screen to the right. We have asked ECW to either get RID of the other choices under "Rx", or

make the "MedispanRx" the default choice. For the time being, you must click on "MedispanRx". If you do not choose "MedispanRx", you might end up pulling a "CustomRx" choice that has no NDC number associated with it. In this case, the allergy alert will NEVER WORK. It is CRUCIAL for a functioning allergy alert system to choose ONLY medications from "MedispanRx".
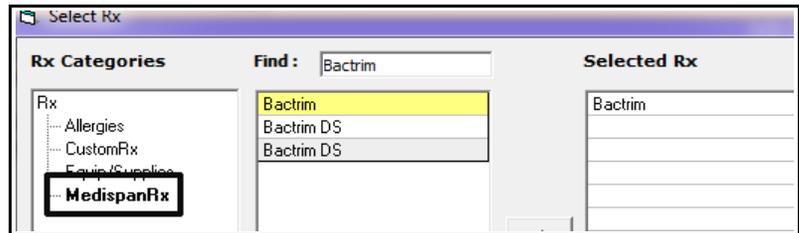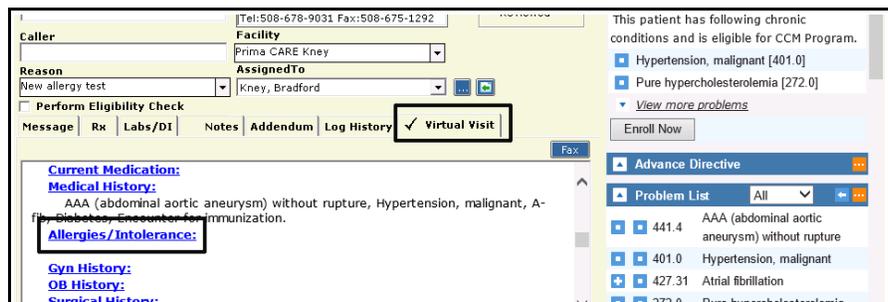
In this case, I will enter Bactrim DS as the agent to which the patient had a reaction.
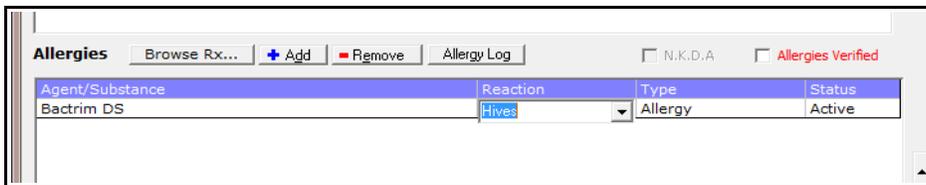

Now, just type in the reaction, the type of reaction (allergy, side effect), and make it "Active" .

You can enter allergies using this same workflow in the Telephone Encounter by opening up the "Virtual Visit" screen as shown here. It works the same way as a progress note does.

You can enter the allergy entry screen from the "Hub", as shown below. You can also enter it from the right panel of a "Telephone Encounter" in the same way.
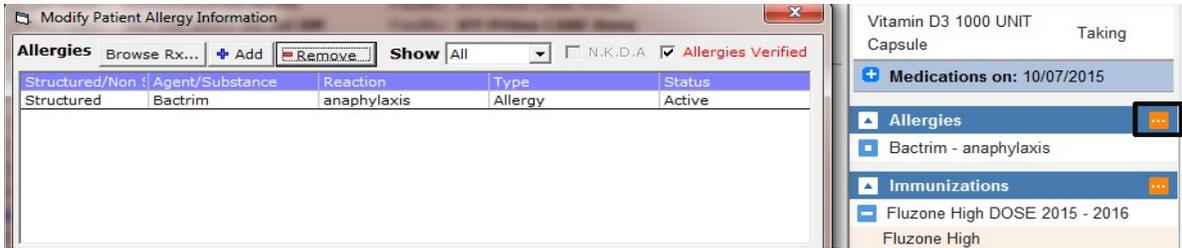
This brings us to our current problem – we have a lot of allergies that we thought we were entering properly over the past 3 years – but do not work (meaning, they do not trigger an alert when someone attempts to prescribe a medication to which the patient has a documented allergy). To correct this situation, the simplest solution (quickest, least pain) is to simply re-enter ALL allergies as the patients are being seen for office visits. Then one might ask: "How do I know if this particular patient's allergies have been updated?"

My solution – enter a short statement in the non-structured allergy box letting the user know that someone has either tested the allergies and found them to be functional, or has re-entered the allergies using "MedispanRx" as shown earlier in this "How To". Just click the "Add" button, and type in something like "Updated". Yes, it is another work-around – but that is life with ECW.


I fully realize how much of an annoyance this is, and how much extra work ECW has caused us AGAIN! For now, this is my best solution to a major problem. For most patients, this shouldn't take more than a minute to fix – for some, with many allergies, it will be a bit more challenging.

You can, of course, test an allergy entry out to see if it does create the appropriate alert when the drug is prescribed. If you find that the old allergy entry works, there is no need to fix it – but, if it doesn't, you still have to go back and re-enter the allergy, as well as put in some kind of comment that the allergy has been tested or updated.

When the allergy entry does work properly, you should get a screen like this.
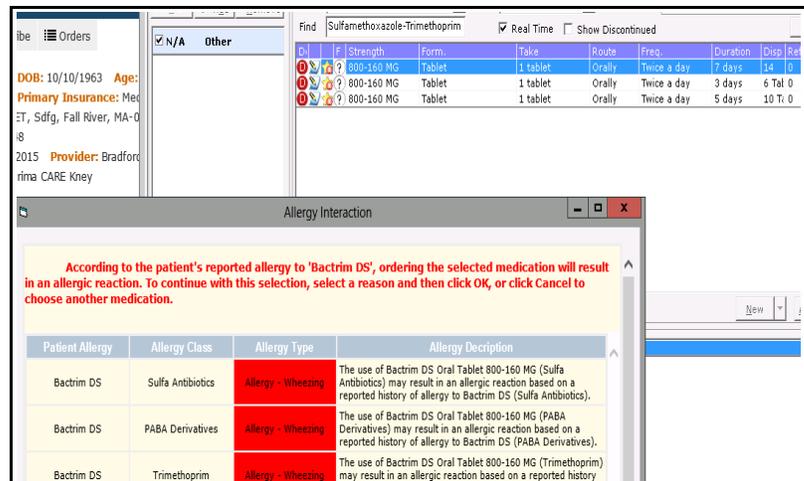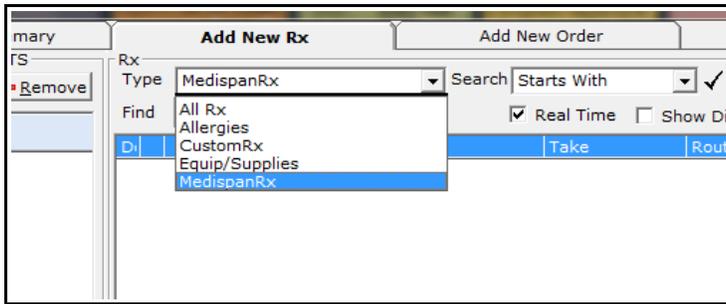
One point to remember in prescribing medications is that any drug from "MedispanRx" will trigger an alert when the allergy is set up properly. However, if you use "CustomRx" or "All", the alert may not be triggered. So ALWAYS use "MedispanRx" as your default medication browser.

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October 11, 2015
Updated 7/4/16