



Patch testing

Patch testing is a time-honored method of discovering the cause of **allergic** contact dermatitis.

It is possible that your eruption is caused or worsened by substances that come into contact with your skin. This could be an **irritant** reaction caused by water, solvents, soaps, cleaning products, acids, and alkalis that can damage skin. It may be caused by an **allergic** reaction which is less common and is triggered by an abnormal reaction of the immune system. It may be caused by normally “inert” substances such as cosmetics, metals, rubber, external creams, etc.

Overview:

- Please note that this procedure requires at three to four visits.
- There will be no needles, pricks, or scratches involved.
- Selected chemicals, or potential allergens, come in a standardized concentration mixed in Vaseline or water. These are hand placed into separate square containers the size of a dime and applied to your back. Strips of tape which include these squares are applied to the back on “Day 1” visit
- We ask that you complete a History Form to give us an idea of your home products and possible exposures. This will be provided on Day 1 of patch testing.
- *******It is essential that you keep your back DRY throughout the process and avoid sweating *******

How it is done:

- Day 1 (may consist of two separate visits): Do not apply moisturizers to your back the morning of your appointment. Bring in personal products. We will test you to those products as well as the standardized allergens. Patches are applied to your back and will be left on until your next visit. The location of each patch is marked with hypoallergenic marker. The patches and marker will be covered by Tegaderm. ****Avoid deep bending or twisting* *Keep your back dry****
- Day 3 visit: Patches will be removed. The markers indicating where patches were applied will be remarked. This can stain clothing, wear something old or dark. ***Keep your back dry***

- Day 6 Visit: The final reading of the test is done. Expect a long appointment (1-1.5hrs). We will review your safe list and how to follow it. *You may not shower until after the appointment*

Other Important Notes

- Personal Products: you may bring in an assortment of products from home. We recommend shampoos, deodorants, perfumes and cosmetics. **Do not bring in laundry detergent or cleaning products as they are too strong to go directly on skin**
- You may continue oral antihistamines (Benadryl, Zyrtec, etc.), topical creams (as long as they are not applied to your back), and all your home medications
- Please wear old or dark clothing as the markers we use may stain.
- Prednisone shots and pills can interfere with results. Please let us know if you are taking these within 2 weeks of your patch testing. It is better to reschedule than get inaccurate results.
- If the patches become loose, reattach them with paper tape and call our office immediately

If you need to communicate with us during your patch test, please call the office at (850) 402-9444 and ask to speak with a member of the patch test team

Side Effects:

Most patients will experience itching during the duration of the test. The itching may be mild to moderate throughout the testing period. This can be caused by irritation or your body's reaction to the selected chemicals, allergens, or personal products. Once the patches are removed on your day 3 visit, the irritation will typically subside with immediate relief once the patches are removed.

Your dermatitis may "wake up" if you develop a positive reaction to the substance causing the rash. Positive reactions may persist for weeks; these can be treated with topical steroids. As positive reactions heal, they may temporarily lighten or darken the skin.

***An immediate systemic reaction is extremely rare but can occur. If at any point you have shortness of breath remove all patches from your back IMMEDIATELY and go to the emergency room. ***