



## PATCH TESTING (Contact Allergy Testing)

In order to find out if your skin is hypersensitive (allergic) to certain materials, a series of test substances can be applied to your back with a patch test. This process can help discover the possible cause for the changes in your skin. A range of substances are used for patch testing. Each substance (known as an allergen) has been tested to find the best concentration that will demonstrate an allergic reaction, without causing irritation to those who are not allergic to the material. Please note that patch testing does not always explain the cause of a skin reaction or rash, and does not include environmental or food allergy testing.

### Medicines and Activities to Avoid Prior to, and During, Patch Testing

- ◆ Please let us know if you have recently been prescribed prednisone (oral steroids) or a steroid injection, as they can affect patch test results. Antihistamines (i.e. Benadryl, Zyrtec, etc) will not interfere with the patch testing.
- ◆ If you are using topical medications, do not apply them to the back for 5 days prior to your 1<sup>st</sup> appointment or during the patch testing process
- ◆ If you use over-the-counter moisturizing creams or lotions, do not apply to the back for 2 days prior to your 1<sup>st</sup> appointment
- ◆ No sun exposure to the back for 2 weeks prior to the 1<sup>st</sup> visit
- ◆ Avoid strenuous activity or exercise that could make you sweat, as well as movements that could cause the patches to come off; the back must be kept free of sweat
- ◆ YOU ARE NOT PERMITTED TO SHOWER DURING THIS WEEK. Washing your hair in the sink and sponge bathing is permitted.

### Scheduling Appointments

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MONDAY

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TUESDAY

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WEDNESDAY

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THURSDAY

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THURSDAY

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MONDAY

Please bring in your commonly used products from home or work (if requested by your provider) to your 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> visits. If the products do not have ingredient labels, and you have internet access, please take the time to find a list of ingredients. This is important in helping to determine the cause of potential reactions.

### 1<sup>st</sup> Visit: 30 minute appointment

Please have your health and history questionnaire completed. You will meet with the testing provider and the questionnaire will be reviewed as well as the products you brought with you. Tiny quantities of materials in individual square plastic chambers will be applied to the upper back. They will be kept in place with special hypoallergenic adhesive tape. The patches are to stay in place and remain undisturbed for 72 hours. If the patches loosen or come off, contact our office for directions.

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Visit: 30 minute appointment

Patches will be removed. The back will be marked with a surgical felt tip pen to identify the test sites. **Remember that you may not wash your back until after your final (3<sup>rd</sup>) visit.** Should you become allergic to one or more of the substances, an itchy rash or redness will appear at the corresponding test area. Please wear an old or dark colored shirt since the sites will be remarked with a blue marker.

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Visit: 30 minute appointment

The marked areas on the back must still be visible at this appointment. Bring in the products that you brought to your 1<sup>st</sup> visit. The provider will examine your back and look for any positive findings. Further instructions will be given based on findings.