

Allergy Patch Testing

What is allergy patch testing?

Allergy patch testing is used to evaluate which **allergens** (substances that cause an allergic reaction) may be contributing to your **dermatitis** (skin irritation).

Patch tests don't use needles. Instead, allergens are applied to patches, which are placed on your skin. Patch tests can detect delayed allergic reactions, which may take a few days to develop. You will wear the patches on your skin for several days before they are removed. When you return to have them removed, we will see which substances (if any) caused an allergic reaction.

Is patch testing covered by my insurance?

Please contact your insurance company to ask if your plan will pay for patch testing, and if you will have any out-of-pocket costs such as a deductible, co-payments, or co-insurance. Your insurance company may want the code for patch testing which is: **CPT 95044**.

You are responsible for any costs not covered by your insurance. There is a separate charge for each individual patch. Usually, each patch costs around \$50. **Please make sure you talk with your provider about the number of patches they're using so you understand the total cost for this test before your appointment.**

How many appointments do I need?

You will need 3 separate appointments for patch testing.

1. **Initial patch test placement appointment:** A medical assistant will place the patches on your skin (on your back). The patches will stay there for 2-3 days.
2. **Patch removal appointment:** In 2-3 days, you will come back to the clinic to have your patches removed. We will take the first look at your test results.
3. **Return visit appointment with your allergist:** In 2-7 days, you will have a visit with your allergist for a second look at your patch test results and to review any allergens you reacted to.

How do I prepare for patch testing?

- Please bring your personal care products (such as lotions, creams, soap, serums, makeup, body wash, shampoo, conditioner, etc.) to your initial patch test placement appointment (if instructed to do so).
- Please watch the "Patch Testing for Patients" video for more detailed information: www.ContactDermatitisInstitute.com/patient-education-materials.php
- Follow the instructions below for when you should stop using certain medications or products before your test. If you are unable to stop taking any of the medications listed, please contact our office at (734) 647-5940 for instructions.

4 weeks before the test:

- Contact our office if you receive any joint or back injections, including:
 - Hydrocortisone (Solu-Cortef®)
 - Triamcinolone (Kenalog®)
 - Methylprednisone (Depo-Medrol®)

2 weeks before the test:

- Do not expose your back to the sun or phototherapy.

- Stop taking these medications:
 - Oral corticosteroids (like prednisone or methylprednisone (Depo-Medrol®))
 - Dexamethasone (Decadron®)
- Contact our office if you take other immunosuppressants.

1 week before the test:

- Do not use topical steroids on your back, such as:
 - Triamcinolone
 - Hydrocortisone
- Do not use topical calcineurin inhibitors on your back, such as:
 - Tacrolimus (Protopic®)
 - Pimecrolimus (Elidel®)

4 hours before the test:

- Do not apply any ointments, creams, or lotions to your back.

Who should I contact with questions?

If you have any questions or concerns before your test, or if you're unable to stop taking any of the medications listed above, please call us at (734) 647-5940.

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