



## PATIENT INSTRUCTIONS FOR SKIN PATCH TESTING

You will be patch tested to see if your skin condition is caused by an allergic reaction to 80 specific substance(s) you might be coming into contact with externally and/or internally. Testing will involve 4 visits (to capture reactions that come/go over different timeframes).

Visit [www.mypatchlink.com](http://www.mypatchlink.com) for more info about testing and allergic contact dermatitis. Testing isn't perfect: sometimes reactions are vague/uncertain; sometimes there's no reaction if the test concentration is too low to stimulate your immune system; or you may be allergic to substances beyond the initial 80 screening test panels (for which a separate round of testing can be considered, if suspected).

Test panels are usually applied to your back (sometimes upper arms/thighs). Please clip short (don't shave) any hair that might keep the panels from sticking.

Avoid applying any steroid/cortisone meds to your back/arms/thighs starting 1 week prior to the 1st day of testing.

During the week of testing, do not apply any moisturizer or meds where the panels were placed.

### VISIT #1:

- You will have 8 test panels taped to your skin. This might feel uncomfortable or itchy. Try to avoid scratching since this might alter the test results.
- Try to keep the area dry for the 48 hours that the panels are in place. Water in the shower and heavy sweating can cause the panels to detach prematurely. If any detach, tape them back in place as best you can and return to the clinic as soon as possible so that staff can decide how to proceed with testing.
- Wear dark clothes the week of testing; the skin marker used can permanently stain fabrics.
- Avoid tanning, sun burning, and pill or IV steroid medications for 1-2 weeks prior to testing. Steroid injected into muscle must be avoided for 4 weeks prior to testing. All of these can negatively affect test results.

### VISIT #2 (48 hours after visit #1):

- The tape and panels will be removed and any initial reactions will be documented. The panel sites will be re-marked with a purple skin marker to make readings easier.
- Continue to minimize sweating. Showering is okay, but do not rub/scrub the patch test sites.

### VISIT #3 (96 hours after visit #1):

- Reading of reactions by the Dermatologist. Avoid sun, excessive washing, heavy sweating.

### VISIT #4 (1 week after visit #1):

- This visit is the most important. Patch test sites will be examined for final/late reactions, and Dr. Carpenter will discuss the significance of your results. You will be given information about the substances that cause the skin reactions, as well as a list of safe topical products from the American Contact Dermatitis Society Contact Allergen Management Program (CAMP).