

## **PATCH TEST INFORMATION HANDOUT**

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Dear Patient:

In order to find out if your skin is hypersensitive (allergic) to certain material, a series of test substances will be applied to your back with a patch test. This test should help discover the possible cause for the changes in your skin. You will be scheduled three appointments in a one week period.

Your cooperation is needed to ensure the successful outcome of this test. You are therefore asked to observe the following points:

1. Stop any topical medication on the back for 5 days prior to the first visit. Stop moisturizer to the back for 2 days prior to the first visit. No sun exposure to the back for 2 weeks prior to the first visit.
2. On your first visit you will have a few patches placed on your back. Leave the patch in place until it is removed in the doctor's office.
3. In order to prevent false test results, during the entire testing period you should not allow the sun or ultraviolet light to shine on it. For the first 2 days when the patches are on your back, please do not shower. Gentle washing or sponge bath below the waist is permitted provided that the patches are kept dry. After the patches have been removed on the third day, gentle washing with water on the back is OK but do not use soap or towel to rub the back.
4. Please try to avoid strenuous physical activities that could make you sweat, as well as movements that could cause the patches to come off.
5. If one or several of the patches loosen at some time during the test, fasten them with additional adhesive tape in exactly the same place (and inform your physician).
5. After the patches are removed, you can shower using lukewarm water. Please do NOT use soap or other products to the back. Please do not scrub and use towel to rub the areas on the back.
6. If you feel some minor itching, this is normal and sometimes occurs when the test is positive. Please do not scratch. If you feel a burning sensation at the test site, contact your physician immediately for further advice.
7. Please visit your doctor's office on the scheduled dates for the monitoring of your test results. You will be given two follow up appointments. The first is 2 days after you first appointment, and the second is 4-7 days after your first appointment – please understand that this is necessary.

8. On your second visit, the patches will be removed. Please remember that you still may not wash or sunbathe the tested areas until after the final visit. The final reading will be on your third visit and we will then identify if you have any allergies to the tested substances.

9. Should you be allergic to one or more of the substances tested, a redness or itchy rash will appear on the corresponding test area. The substances producing these skin reactions could be the cause of your allergy. Redness and itching from the test usually disappear after a few days. If they are very uncomfortable, I can prescribe medication for you to use after the third visit.

**Important:**

Should you notice additional reddening or skin change which appears unexpectedly within a period of three weeks after monitoring of the test sites, report these to your physician as soon as possible.

If during the testing period or before the final monitoring date you must take medication, even if just applied locally (ointments, creams, drops, etc.), please report this to your physician before starting the medication.

**MEDICINES TO AVOID PRIOR TO AND DURING PATCH TESTING**

If you are on prednisone or recently took prednisone (oral steroids), please contact your doctor. Prednisone can affect the patch test results.

If you are using topical medications, please do not apply them to the back for 5 days prior to the first appointment.

If you are using over the counter moisturizing creams, please do not apply them to the back for 2 days prior to the first appointment.

Please do not forget to bring personal items to be tested to your first appointment, if your doctor has requested you to do so.