
Allergy Patch Skin Testing

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What is allergy patch skin testing?

Your doctor has suggested you/your child have this test as part of the evaluation at National Jewish Health. Patch skin testing may be used to find out if a rash is from direct contact with an allergen. This will help your doctor identify the best treatment for you/your child.

How do you get ready for the test?

Please follow these directions when getting ready for this test. Check with your/your child's doctor before you stop the medicine. If the medicine is not stopped before the test we will not be able to complete the test.

- Your skin should be clear for 2 weeks before the test **if possible**.
 - Avoid exposing your back to the sun for **1 week** before the testing.
 - Stop these medicines for **1 week** before your appointment:
 - Topical steroids to the back
 - Keep the panels and the skin around the panels dry during the two days. You can take a shallow bath or sponge bath, but avoid getting your back wet.
 - Avoid physical activities that may cause sweating or movement during the two days.
 - If you have a lot of itching or burning under a panel, remove the panel and call the doctor.
 - Stop these medicines for **3-5 days** before the test:
 - Oral corticosteroids
 - Non-steroid anti-inflammatories
 - Do **not** apply any ointments, creams or lotions to the back **4 hours** before the appointment.
 - **Continue to take all your other medicine as you usually do.**
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What is done during the test?

You will visit us a number of times during patch testing.

The patch tests will be placed during the first visit. Patch tests include two or three rectangular panels with small amounts of pre-applied allergens. Sometimes individual patch tests may be applied. The panels are placed on the skin, typically the back. The panels also have acrylic tape as part of the panel. This will help the panels adhere to the skin for two days.

After two days the panels are removed and the skin reactions are measured. You will come back again one or two days after the panels are removed to measure the skin reactions again.

What should you do once the patch tests are in place?

Please follow these directions while the patch tests are in place:

How long will the test take?

You will visit us three to four times during the patch testing. Each visit will take about 30 to 40 minutes.

How do you get to your test?

If you are being seen at National Jewish Health:

Adults - On the day of your scheduled test, report to the skin testing area in the Adult Clinic.

Children – On the day of your scheduled test, report to the skin testing area in the Pediatric Clinic.

If you and have questions please call 303-398-1355.

Visit our website for more information about support groups, clinical trials and lifestyle information.

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