

PATCH TESTING

A patch test is a diagnostic tool to help determine if your dermatitis is caused by an allergic reaction. A patch test helps to identify the exact substance or substances that may be causing your problem.

Some common sources of allergens are ingredients in cosmetic, perfumes, soaps, creams, shampoos, and a host of other products that you come in contact with everyday.

The test involves the application of a small amount of known allergens to the skin surface, usually on your back. The patch test is covered by tape so that it remains watertight and is left on your skin for 2 to 3 days. After it is removed, the doctor checks your skin to see if you have any reaction at the site of these patches. This would indicate that an allergic response to that particular substance has taken place.

Before the patch test is performed you should not use topical steroid creams on the test areas. Also it is best to be off oral cortisone type medications and antihistamines before the test.

The day of your patch test application do not use any creams or lotions on your back.

While the test is on your skin it must remain dry. No showers, baths or swimming. Avoid activities that cause excessive perspiration. You can take shallow tub baths or sponge bathe. Wear loose clothing to prevent the patches from pulling off. Call the doctor's office if the test site itches extremely or the patches pull off your back.

The best treatment for allergic dermatitis is to avoid what causes the rash. Patch testing helps to identify these exact substances so that you can be made aware of what products that you are coming in contact with that will cause your problem.

Before you leave today the office staff will set up your appointment. If you have any questions about this, please do not hesitate to ask.