

PATCH TESTING OVERVIEW & AFTERCARE INSTRUCTIONS

Overview

What is patch testing?

Patch testing is used to identify possible causes of an allergic contact dermatitis. It is best reserved for situations when there is a high suspicion that a rash is being caused by an external foreign material coming into contact with the skin. If a potential allergen is identified through patch testing, complete removal of this exposure may result in the resolution of the rash.

Patch testing involves taping rectangular panels on your back for 48 hours. These panels contain small chambers that house potential allergens. At 48 hours after their initial application, the panels are removed and Dr. Lee will assess your back to see if any specific areas have developed a rash. Each area on your back is mapped to a specific allergen and if a rash is noticed in a specific region on your back, it can be linked to a specific chemical or product. At 72-96 hours after the initial application, Dr. Lee re-evaluates your back to make sure there are no late reactions surfacing that weren't present at 48 hours.

If an allergen is identified, Dr. Lee then cross-references the chemical or product with a database and provides you with a list of things to avoid to minimize your exposure. Elimination of this exposure usually results in resolution of the rash.

Aftercare Instructions

- 1) You should not take any antihistamines as they may inhibit a positive reaction. This includes medications such as Benadryl, Allegra, Zyrtec, Claritin, and Alavert.
- 2) Do not get your back wet. If you need to bathe, you should take a bath and wash your hair in the sink to avoid getting water on your back as this may interfere with your patch test.
- 3) Try to avoid touching the area where the patches have been applied.
- 4) Do not remove the patches.
- 5) Avoid excessive sweating. We recommend that you do not schedule a patch testing when you are going to be participating in athletic events.
- 6) If you feel that you are having a medical emergency after hours due to your patches (i.e. trouble breathing, headache, nausea, or dizziness) contact our office immediately or your local emergency room and have the listing of patches available to take with you if you need to go to the emergency room.

For true emergencies, please call our office immediately to speak with a physician.