



Patch Testing Instructions/FAQs

Patch testing checks for delayed skin allergies that may cause an itchy rash. Small amounts of allergens are taped to your back for about 48 hours. This is different from a skin-prick test and does not test for food allergies.

Before your first appointment

- **Review medications with our office in advance.** Prednisone, steroid injections, and other medicines that suppress the immune system may affect results. Do not stop or change prescribed medicines on your own. Prescribed antihistamines can usually be continued unless we tell you otherwise.
- **For 1 week before testing:** avoid steroid creams, tacrolimus (Protopic), pimecrolimus (Elidel), and other medicated creams on the test area unless our office gives different instructions. Tell us about recent sun exposure, tanning, or phototherapy; avoid sun and tanning on your back before testing.
- **On testing day:** arrive with a clean, dry back without lotion, oil, or cream. Wear a loose, dark shirt; marking ink may stain clothing.
- Bring your medication list and any requested skin-care products with ingredient labels. Tell us if you are pregnant, breastfeeding, have a rash on your back, or react to adhesive tape.

Your testing schedule

CPT Code: 95044 (#36 patches) ; Diagnosis: Allergic Contact Dermatitis

Visit	What to Expect	Date / Time
Day 1	Patches applied to back	
Day 3 (48 hours)	Patches removed; first reading.	
Day 4 or 5 (72 or 96 hours)	Return for a later reading / visit	
Day 7 (if requested)	Additional reading for delayed reactions	

During testing: protect your back

- **Keep your back dry until our office clears you after the final reading.** Use a sponge bath without wetting your back. Avoid showers that wet the area, swimming, hot tubs, and saunas.
- Avoid sweating, strenuous exercise, stretching, and friction that may loosen patches. Do not scratch, rub, or apply creams to the test area. Keep skin markings intact after patch removal.
- Leave patches in place until your scheduled removal. If an edge lifts, secure it with office-approved tape. If a patch falls off, note the time, photograph the area, and contact us; do not reapply it yourself.

After testing & when to call

Mild itching or redness can occur. Call our office for severe itching, pain, blistering, a spreading rash, or loose patches. If a new reaction appears after your last visit, take a photo and contact us. We will explain your results and how to avoid relevant allergens. Resume normal washing and skin treatments when cleared by our office.

Call 911 for trouble breathing, throat swelling, or fainting.

Follow the dates and individual medication instructions given by our office. Patient education references: American Academy of Dermatology (aad.org); British Association of Dermatologists, Patch Testing (July 2024, bad.org.uk); Cleveland Clinic, Patch Test (2025, my.clevelandclinic.org).