

PATCH TESTING INFORMATION

CUTANEOUS ALLERGY CLINIC
Glamorgan House (Ground Floor)
The Welsh Institute of Dermatology
University Hospital of Wales
Cardiff CF14 4XW

What is patch testing?

Patch testing is a way of finding allergies to chemicals/materials that come in contact with skin during your daily activities at home, work, hobbies or other recreational activities.

Patch testing does not detect food allergy or allergy causing sneezing, asthma or hives.

How many visits will be needed?

Three visits in the same week are **essential** for the tests to be performed appropriately.

If you are not able to attend any of these visits for any reason, please ring us on 029 20743181 and reschedule your appointment as early as possible.

1st visit on Monday afternoon: about 1 hour

2nd visit on Wednesday morning: 20-30 mins

3rd visit on Friday afternoon: 20-30 mins

The appointments for the 2nd & 3rd visit will be booked on your first visit.

How is the patch test performed?

Mon: Suspected chemicals/materials are applied on to the back and covered with adhesive tape.

Wed: Tape is removed and the skin on your back is marked with special ink to identify each chemical.

Fri: Final reading and the results will be explained to you at this visit.

What should I bring to the clinic?

Bring small quantities of any substance that you suspect is causing your rash or making it worse. Some examples of the articles you could bring are – Household: cosmetics, perfumes, deodorants, toiletries, skin treatment creams, shoes, hobby related articles; Work: any special clothing, chemical or equipment you use at your work.

If possible try to find out the name and chemical nature of these products. For household articles you can find this information on the packaging or enclosed leaflets and please bring them along if possible. For work related articles this information can be found on 'Material Safety Data Sheets' and your supervisor may be able to obtain them for you. Also bring a list of your current medications and any skin treatment creams/ointments you are using.

Do I need to take any precautions before the visit?

1. Stop any steroid creams you may be using on your back for 2 days before the visit. You can continue to use the steroid creams elsewhere.
2. Avoid applying any moisturiser to the back on the day of first visit.
3. Avoid excessive sun exposure in the week prior to the clinic visit.

Any precautions during the test?

1. ***The back has to remain dry throughout the 5 day period and no showers/baths are allowed during the period of testing.***
2. Avoid exercise or excessive movements as the tape may fall off.
3. The tape may irritate the skin and may also restrict your back movements and you may need to make appropriate adjustments at home/work.
4. Wear dark or old clothing during this week as the ink may stain the clothing.

If you have any questions the staff in the Cutaneous Allergy Clinic will be happy to answer them.