

contact dermatitis & occupational dermatology patch test clinic

patient details

Patient's name: (Mr / Mrs / Ms / Miss / Dr / Prof)

Address:

appointments

You are required to attend three appointments as part of the allergy testing process.

Appointment 1: Monday (**allow up to 3 hours**)

Appointment 2: Wednesday (**allow 1 hour**)

Appointment 3: Friday (**allow 1 hour**)

Important: Please phone us to confirm your appointment or alternatively if you are unable to attend to reschedule.

Ph: 9623 9402 (direct) or 9623 9400 (reception).

A non-attendance fee of \$50 will apply if you fail to either attend or notify us that you will be cancelling your appointments.

information about appointments

Most patients will need to attend 3 appointments over a 5-day period. In some circumstances this will be extended to a 7-day period.

appointment 1: Patients will have a full consultation with the specialist dermatologist, who will decide what needs to be tested. The clinic nurse will then make up specific patches and apply them to the back.

appointment 2: The patches are removed and your back assessed to see if there have been any reactions or 'red spots' where the patches have been applied.

appointment 3: The dermatologist will complete a secondary assessment of your back to see if there have been any additional 'red spots' showing up where the patches were applied. The dermatologist will then discuss the results and management of your skin condition.

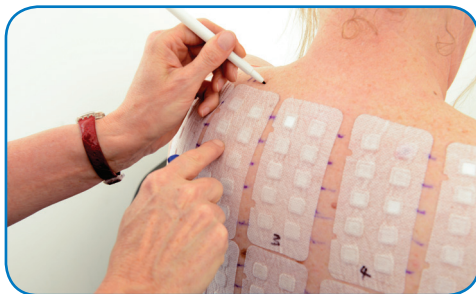
Please continue to read for IMPORTANT information.

about patch testing

what is patch testing?

Patch testing is a process used to detect whether someone has allergic contact dermatitis to something they have contacted at home or in their workplace. **Allergies can develop at any stage of life.**

Patients are tested to a baseline series of allergens in addition to substances that are used at home or work, which are diluted. These are applied to hypoallergenic tape and then placed on the skin on the back. Patch testing is different from prick testing, which is used to investigate hayfever and food allergies. If a relevant allergy is found in the patch testing process, avoidance of the allergen may cure your skin problem.



example shown of patch testing

how many patches?

The number of patches applied is specific to each individual. There are 10 discs on each patch. Patients usually have between 6 - 14 patches.

why the back?

The back is used for patch testing because there is lots of room to put the patches. This also gives people the opportunity to have a bath, as the patches must be kept dry during the testing. **Showers must be avoided for the duration testing.**

preparation for testing

- If your doctor has given you cortisone/prednisolone tablets for your skin condition, please call us for advice. Generally cortisone/prednisolone tablets should not be taken 48 hours before testing.
- If you have eczema or a rash on your back, it may not be possible to have the patch test performed. Please contact us for advice.
- Shower on the morning of the tests, as you cannot get your back wet from the time the patches go on until the time you see the dermatologist for your third appointment.
- Men with hair on their backs should shave or wax it off a **day or two before testing** (do not use chemical hair removal products).
- Do not put any creams or oils on your back the morning of the testing.
- Do not expose your back to sunlight on or the week prior to testing. It is thought that sunlight may reduce the immune response of the skin.
- During testing, sweating must be avoided as patches could fall off. If you are working in a job where you get hot and sweaty, please call us for advice. Physical activity or playing sports during testing is also strongly discouraged.

what does an allergic reaction look like?

Once the patches are taken off, the dermatologist assesses any red and raised spots that may have appeared. These are normally the size of a 5 cent coin and appear where the discs were placed. They are usually itchy.

Interpretation of patch tests requires considerable skill. Not all positive tests are relevant, so it is necessary for the dermatologist to interpret the meaning of the reaction. If this testing is negative, it may indicate that you have a different condition, such as irritant contact dermatitis, eczema, or contact urticaria. Another form of testing known as prick testing or a blood test is used to diagnose this condition. If you develop redness, swelling or blisters after your last visit, it may mean that you have a delayed reaction.



example shown of positive patch test reaction

what to bring to the appointment?

Bring everything which is in contact with your damaged skin. We may test up to 20 of your personal products.

These might include:

- **Products used on your skin** (bring in its original container), even if you don't think it is causing any problems e.g. moisturisers, hand cleansers, cosmetics (including nail polish).
- Products specific to the area of skin affected e.g. gloves if you have hand dermatitis, or shoes and socks if your feet are affected.
- Work samples - either bring them in their original container if not too big, or put a small sample amount into an individual screw top glass container and label.
- Safety Data Sheets (SDS) for all products and chemicals you come into contact with in the workplace. You should be able to get these from your OHS representative, union official, supervisor or employer. It is compulsory for the workplace to supply these.

While we may not necessarily test all of these substances, we would like to see them and assess their relevance. **You will be required to bring these items to all three appointments.**

how much will patch testing cost?

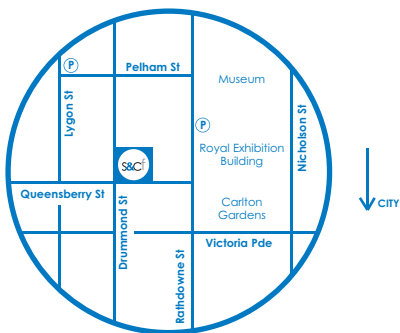
The cost of the consultations and patch testing is usually between \$400 and \$800. The Medicare rebate is approximately \$200. The total account must be paid at the conclusion of the last appointment (on the Friday). If blood tests or biopsies are required, additional fees will be billed by the pathology company.

additional payment information

- Pensioners & Health Care Card holders are billed at a reduced rate. Please contact the Foundation for more information regarding these fees.
- WorkCover claims. If your skin condition is considered to be work-related, an account may be sent to your employer. Please bring your employers mailing address details with you.

what payment methods are accepted

EFTPOS, credit cards, cheque and cash are all accepted.



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