**Patch Test Instructions**

Patch tests are done to check for allergies to certain chemicals. During a patch test, small metal circles dotted with chemicals are taped to the skin on your back.

The metal circles (patches) will remain in place for 48 hours (2 days). At that time, you will return to the Dermatology Clinic and the doctor will remove the patches, mark the locations of the patches with a pen, and look for any reactions. You will return to the clinic again the next day for a final reading by the doctor.

This sheet will tell you how to take care of the patches during the test.

**Care While Wearing Patches**

Keep the entire patch area dry during the testing period, the two days when the patches are taped onto your back and the following day when you back has the pen markings. Do not shower for the entire three to four days. You may sponge bathe all areas of your body except your back. Be careful when shampooing your hair so you do not splash water on your back.

Do not take part in any strenuous activities during the test. Avoid any activities that make you sweat or that use vigorous arm movements. These may loosen the patches.

Wear a T-shirt to bed. This will help keep the edges of the tape from catching on your sheets. You may sleep on your back, if you wish.

**Problems**

If any of the patches fall off, call the Dermatology Clinic. The phone number is (612) 467-5524. Ask to speak to the nurse, s/he will tell you what to do. If a patch falls off after clinic hours, please call the next day.

If a strip of tests loosens so that the metal circles are not touching your skin, *do not* replace the patches. Remove the loose strip noting the day and time. It will also help if you write down any reactions you notice as the tape is removed. Circle any reddened or blistered areas with a ballpoint pen.

A positive reaction and/or having tape on your back may cause mild discomfort and itching. This is normal. However, if you feel severe itching or burning that you cannot stand, remove the patch at once. You may have someone cut off that particular patch and mark the location of the patch, on your back, with a pen. You may take over-the-counter Benadryl (diphenhydramine) to help you sleep or to relieve itching, if needed.
You should not take oral prednisone during the test period, or have had a recent cortisone injection because this will interfere with the test results.

**Follow-Up Appointment**
You will return to the clinic to have the skin patches read 48 and 72 hours after they were put on. You will be given a return appointment when you get the patches. You may want to wear an older shirt when you return to the clinic. We use markers that may get on your shirt

After the patches are removed, you will have to wait 30 minutes before the area can be read. If you had to remove a patch, be sure to tell the doctor or nurse.

Your doctor will tell you the results of the test and what treatment you will need.

If you develop a patch of red, rough, scaly skin at any of the test sites within three weeks after your last patch test reading, call the clinic and speak to one of the nurses or to your doctor.

If you have any questions or problems, call the Dermatology Clinic at (612) 467-5524.

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