Contact Dermatitis Investigation Unit

Barnes Building
Dermatology
0161 206 1038
IMPORTANT:
Please read this booklet BEFORE you come for your first appointment.

The Contact Dermatitis Investigation Unit is in the Barnes Building opposite the Mayo Building.

Contact dermatitis investigation requires detailed assessment before proceeding with the tests. Patch testing is used to identify or exclude allergic reactions on the skin due to contact (it does not identify any other sort of allergy e.g. food allergy).

It will require four visits as outlined.

**Assessment Visit**
(1st visit usually Monday)

You will be seen by the doctor who will take an in-depth history of your problem. The information you provide will dictate what you will be tested with.

**3rd Visit**
(usually Wednesday)

The patches will be taken off and the doctor will look at your back. More patches may be applied.

Please allow up to one hour for this visit.

**2nd Visit**
(usually Monday)

A series of 50-200 tests will be put on your back (see photograph). Please allow up to one hour for this visit. Do not apply creams or ointments to your back before attending on that day.

**4th Visit**
(usually Friday)

The doctor will look at your back, then discuss the result of the test with you.

Please allow up to 2 hours for this visit.
1. What are the benefits?
When a relevant contact allergy is identified, advice can be given to reduce or even eradicate your skin problem and reduce or eliminate the risk of future recurrences.

It may guide your doctor with regard to safe treatments for you.

2. If my tests are negative has it all been a waste of time?
We don’t think so because the negative finding helps your doctor focus on alternative explanations for your condition and excludes concerns about the possibility of contact allergy.

3. Why have I been tested for substances which don’t seem to apply to me?
Experience has shown that patients [and doctors!] are poor at predicting their contact allergies.

By doing this, we commonly find unsuspected allergies relevant to the cause of the skin problem.

As new allergens are identified we need to screen patients for allergy to them to establish their importance.

4. What side effects may occur?
Patch testing is a routine investigation which has been carried out for over 100 years.

It is a non-invasive test with an excellent safety record.
Short-lived minor discomfort and irritation from positive patch tests and under the adhesive of the test units is quite common and will not be expected to cause any significant difficulty.

The following effects are very uncommon but have been reported:

1. Very strong positive reactions to test substances may result in a small blistered area on the back [rare]
2. Multiple strong reactions may result in several itchy blistered areas on the back [exceedingly rare].
3. A more generalised flare of eczema may occur either over the back or at the site of the original skin problem [exceedingly rare].

4. Allergy: there is a tiny chance you may become allergic to one of the substances applied during patch testing. In practice this does not seem to cause a problem in the long term [exceedingly rare].
5. In patients with dark skin there is a chance of causing hyperpigmentation [increased darkening of the skin] or depigmentation [lightening of the skin] at the site of the patch test but this would not be expected to be permanent [exceedingly rare].
6. Scarring and infection are possible at the site of patch testing [exceedingly rare].

The previous three risks noted would be expected to be short-lived and last no longer than one week and settle with treatment if this is necessary.

If you have any queries about your test, contact:

Nurse in charge

Sue Parkinson - Consultant Secretary

Waiting list co-ordinator

If you have any concerns or questions about your patch tests, please ask any of the staff who will be pleased to answer your questions

Notes

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For further information on this leaflet, it’s references and sources used, please contact 0161 206 1038.

Copies of this leaflet are available in other formats (for example, large print or easyread) upon request. Alternative formats may also be available via www.srft.nhs.uk/for-patients/patient-leaflets/

In accordance with the Equality Act we will make reasonable adjustments to enable individuals with disabilities to access this service. Please contact the service/clinic you are attending by phone or email prior to your appointment to discuss your requirements.

Interpreters are available for both verbal and non-verbal (e.g. British Sign Language) languages, on request. Please contact the service/clinic you are visiting to request this.

Under the Human Tissue Act 2004, consent will not be required from living patients from whom tissue has been taken for diagnosis or testing to use any left over tissue for the following purposes: clinical audit, education or training relating to human health, performance assessment, public health monitoring and quality assurance.

If you object to your tissue being used for any of the above purposes, please inform a member of staff immediately.

This is a teaching hospital which plays an important role in the training of future doctors. The part patients play in this process is essential to make sure that we produce the right quality doctors for all of our futures. If at any time you would prefer not to have students present please inform the doctor or nurses and this will not affect your care in anyway.

Salford Royal operates a smoke-free policy.
For advice on stopping smoking contact the Hospital Specialist Stop Smoking Service on 0161 206 1779

Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust
Stott Lane, Salford, Manchester, M6 8HD
Telephone 0161 789 7373
www.srft.nhs.uk

If you would like to become a Foundation Trust Member please visit:
www.srft.nhs.uk/for-members

If you have any suggestions as to how this document could be improved in the future then please visit:
http://www.srft.nhs.uk/for-patients

If you need this information leaflet translated, please telephone:

Polish
Jeżeli potrzebne jest Państwu tłumaczenie, proszę zadzwonić pod numer.

Urdu
اگرآپ کواس ترجمانی کی ضرورت بھی تومرکیاتی کرکیفون کریں-

Arabic
اذا كنتم بحاجة إلى تفسير أو ترجمة هذا الراجاء الانصال

Chinese
如果需要翻譯，請拨打电话

Farsi
اگر به ترجمه این نیاز دارید ، ولذا تلفن کنید 

0161 206 0224 

or Email: InterpretationandTrans@srft.nhs.uk