Question: How do you do a patch test for chemical peels?

Answer:

**Patch or spot testing** for [**chemical peels**](http://www.skinacea.com/facials/peels/chemical.html) is essential for safe peeling. By testing out a peel solution on a small part of your skin before doing a full peel, you can see how your skin responds and gauge how long to leave the peel on your skin.

Patch testing is extremely important because if you were to have an adverse reaction to the peel solution, it's better to have it happen on a small area of skin instead of, say, your entire face. You must do a patch test for any new peel solution, even if it is a peel you've used before but just at a stronger concentration.

To do a patch test, first wash your skin with a soap-free cleanser and pat dry. Apply a prep solution or astringent of some sort to prime your skin for the peel. Then, dip a Q-tip or makeup brush into the peel solution and apply onto a small patch of skin around 1" in diameter.

If you are doing a peel on your face, apply the patch test to the skin below your ear along your jawline. If you are going to do a peel on your hands, patch test your hands around the wrist area. If you are going to do a peel on your neck, spot test the skin on your neck below your ear.

Basically, test the peel on the part of your skin where you will be doing a full peel, but on a part that is less noticeable (in case something goes wrong). Even if your hands respond well to a peel, it doesn't mean you can skip doing a patch test on your face because different parts of skin on your body respond differently to the same peel.

Leave the patch test on your skin for one minute before[**neutralizing**](http://www.skinacea.com/faq/treatments/t13-neutralizing-solution-for-tca-peels.html). If your skin feels fine after one minute, you can leave the spot test on longer. You can also leave the peel on your skin longer depending on the type of peel you are using. However, if your skin burns or gets extremely uncomfortable, neutralize the peel solution immediately with a [**neutralizing solution**](http://www.skinacea.com/faq/treatments/t13-neutralizing-solution-for-tca-peels.html) or by splashing your face with water.

Wait 24 hours (48 hours for medium-deep peels like [**TCA peels**](http://www.skinacea.com/facials/peels/TCA.html)) to see how your skin reacts. If you experience no allergic reactions (red, itchy bumps) or adverse reactions of any sort, you can then proceed with the full peel. Follow the directions for use that come with your peel.