



Iodine Patch Test (Controversial)

Iodine is a very common deficiency because our soils are depleted and the only reliable source of iodine is the sea. Since most people don't eat sea vegetables on a regular basis, it's difficult to consume enough iodine unless you use iodized salt. Another factor that increases your need for iodine is the presence of radioactive iodine in the environment via the widespread consumption of the iodine antagonists:

- fluoride and chlorine (added to public water supplies)
- bromine (used as a dough conditioner in most commercially available bread)

These chemicals will quickly deplete iodine from the body and interfere with iodine metabolism leading to a number of problems including hypothyroidism, lowered vitality, cognitive dysfunction, lowered immunity, and obesity. Iodine is essential for the proper synthesis of thyroid hormone, so it is very important to maintain healthy iodine levels.

The *Iodine Patch Test* is a test that's used by many functional medicine doctors to assess for iodine deficiency. It's an easy test that can be performed at home. Although it's somewhat controversial as a valid indicator for iodine deficiency, there appear to be as many opponents as proponents. One of the reasons it's controversial is that there are many factors that can affect the appearance of the iodine patch, including evaporation, perspiration, showering or getting the arm wet from doing dishes or hand washing and skin pigmentation.

The theory behind the test is that the iodine will take about 24 hours to fully penetrate the skin if the body is **sufficient** in iodine.

If deficient, the iodine will be absorbed more quickly. I've observed people who had their "iodine patch" disappear within 8-12 hours, then supplement with topical iodine such that as soon as it disappeared, they would reapply.

With repeated application, the patch began to last longer until after a couple of weeks, the iodine patch lasted over 24 hours. By this time, the patient was feeling more energetic and had fewer low thyroid indicators.



Materials

A bottle of liquid iodine

Procedure

1. Paint the skin of the inside of the forearm or the abdomen with a 2-inch square patch of 2% iodine solution, being careful not to get the solution on clothes as it will stain.
2. Note the time the iodine is applied to the skin on the *Iodine Patch Test Tracking Chart*.
3. Let the iodine patch air dry before putting on clothes.
4. Avoid soaking in hot tubs or baths for 24 hours as the chlorine or bromine in the water will cause the iodine to patch to fade.

Note the time it takes for the patch to disappear on the tracking chart.

Iodine Patch Test Result Interpretation		
Overall, the faster the body draws in the iodine, the greater the iodine need is likely to be.		
Patch Disappears	Iodine Deficiency	Action
< 12 hours	Severe	Supplement with topical iodine. Reapply as soon as it disappears. Alternatively, take <i>Ioderal</i> (available on Amazon) or other oral iodine supplement: 12.5 mg three times a day. Repeat test in 2 weeks and adjust dose.
12 - 18 hours	Moderate	As per above except oral dose 12.5 mg twice a day.
18 - 24 hours	Mild	As per above except oral dose 12.5 mg once a day.
> 24 hours	None	Nothing. Continue to eat and supplement as before to continue to support Iodine sufficiency.



Iodine Patch Test Tracking Chart

Iodine Patch Test Tracking Chart			
Name			
Date	Time Iodine Applied	Time Color Disappears	# Hours to Completely Disappear