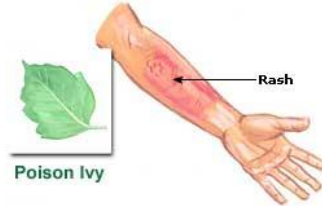




## CENTRAL TEXAS ALLERGY & ASTHMA

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### Contact Dermatitis Poison ivy/oak



Most people at some point in their lives will experience some type of skin irritation. When certain substances come into contact with your skin, they may cause a rash called contact dermatitis. There are two kinds of contact dermatitis: **irritant and allergic**.

**Irritant contact dermatitis** is caused by a substance that comes into contact with the skin. The skin tends to be more painful than itchy. The reaction tends to vary based on how strong the substance is and how long you have had contact with it. For irritant contact dermatitis you will need to avoid the substance that is causing the reaction. By doing this it will relieve your symptoms and prevent further damage to the skin.

**Allergic contact dermatitis** is best known by the itchy, red, blistered rash that occurs after coming into contact with a substance. Some of the most common types of allergic contact dermatitis include: nickel, perfumes, dyes, rubber (latex) products, cosmetics, and poison ivy. The reaction caused by poison ivy is caused by a chemical in the plant called urushiol. Reactions can occur from touching objects that the plant has come into contact with. However, once your skin has been washed, you cannot get another reaction from touching the rash or blisters that are now on your skin. Usual time for reactions to occur is 24 to 48 hours after contact. Once a reaction starts, it may take up to a month for symptoms to go away, even with treatment.

Treatment depends on the severity of symptoms. Cold soaks and compresses can offer some relief in the early stages of the rash. Topical corticosteroids creams may be prescribed depending on how bad the reaction is. To prevent reactions from returning, avoid contact with the offending substance.

### ALLERGIC CONTACT DERMATITIS

