

Reporting Summary

Nature Research wishes to improve the reproducibility of the work that we publish. This form provides structure for consistency and transparency in reporting. For further information on Nature Research policies, see our [Editorial Policies](#) and the [Editorial Policy Checklist](#).

Statistics

For all statistical analyses, confirm that the following items are present in the figure legend, table legend, main text, or Methods section.

n/a Confirmed

- ☐ ☒ The exact sample size (n) for each experimental group/condition, given as a discrete number and unit of measurement
- ☐ ☒ A statement on whether measurements were taken from distinct samples or whether the same sample was measured repeatedly
- ☐ ☒ The statistical test(s) used AND whether they are one- or two-sided
Only common tests should be described solely by name; describe more complex techniques in the Methods section.
- ☒ ☐ A description of all covariates tested
- ☐ ☒ A description of any assumptions or corrections, such as tests of normality and adjustment for multiple comparisons
- ☐ ☒ A full description of the statistical parameters including central tendency (e.g. means) or other basic estimates (e.g. regression coefficient) AND variation (e.g. standard deviation) or associated estimates of uncertainty (e.g. confidence intervals)
- ☒ ☐ For null hypothesis testing, the test statistic (e.g. F , t , r) with confidence intervals, effect sizes, degrees of freedom and P value noted
Give P values as exact values whenever suitable.
- ☒ ☐ For Bayesian analysis, information on the choice of priors and Markov chain Monte Carlo settings
- ☒ ☐ For hierarchical and complex designs, identification of the appropriate level for tests and full reporting of outcomes
- ☐ ☒ Estimates of effect sizes (e.g. Cohen's d , Pearson's r), indicating how they were calculated

Our web collection on [statistics for biologists](#) contains articles on many of the points above.

Software and code

Policy information about [availability of computer code](#)

Data collection The following software applications were used to collect data and to program the devices: lock-in amplifier (SRS SR830, Stanford Research), current source (Keithley 6221, Tektronix), and data acquisition (DAQ) system.

Data analysis Data analysis and plotting were done with Origin and Adobe Premiere Pro.

For manuscripts utilizing custom algorithms or software that are central to the research but not yet described in published literature, software must be made available to editors and reviewers. We strongly encourage code deposition in a community repository (e.g. GitHub). See the Nature Research [guidelines for submitting code & software](#) for further information.

Data

Policy information about [availability of data](#)

All manuscripts must include a [data availability statement](#). This statement should provide the following information, where applicable:

- Accession codes, unique identifiers, or web links for publicly available datasets
- A list of figures that have associated raw data
- A description of any restrictions on data availability

The data supporting the results in this study are available within the paper and its Supplementary Information. The raw patient data are available from the authors, subject to approval from Northwestern University's Institutional Review Board.

Field-specific reporting

Please select the one below that is the best fit for your research. If you are not sure, read the appropriate sections before making your selection.

☒ Life sciences ☐ Behavioural & social sciences ☐ Ecological, evolutionary & environmental sciences

For a reference copy of the document with all sections, see nature.com/documents/nr-reporting-summary-flat.pdf

Life sciences study design

All studies must disclose on these points even when the disclosure is negative.

Sample size	Sample sizes were chosen according to relevant reports in the literature.
Data exclusions	No data were excluded.
Replication	Experiments were replicated multiple times.
Randomization	Randomization was not required.
Blinding	The investigators completing the data analyses were blinded to the experimental groups.

Reporting for specific materials, systems and methods

We require information from authors about some types of materials, experimental systems and methods used in many studies. Here, indicate whether each material, system or method listed is relevant to your study. If you are not sure if a list item applies to your research, read the appropriate section before selecting a response.

Materials & experimental systems

n/a	Involved in the study
☒	☐ Antibodies
☒	☐ Eukaryotic cell lines
☒	☐ Palaeontology and archaeology
☐	☒ Animals and other organisms
☐	☒ Human research participants
☐	☒ Clinical data
☒	☐ Dual use research of concern

Methods

n/a	Involved in the study
☒	☐ ChIP-seq
☒	☐ Flow cytometry
☒	☐ MRI-based neuroimaging

Animals and other organisms

Policy information about [studies involving animals](#); [ARRIVE guidelines](#) recommended for reporting animal research

Laboratory animals	Abdominal porcine skin.
Wild animals	The study did not involve wild animals.
Field-collected samples	The study did not involve samples collected from the field.
Ethics oversight	The experiments were conducted in accordance with the ethical guidelines of the National Institutes of Health, and was approved by Northwestern University's Institutional Review Board.

Note that full information on the approval of the study protocol must also be provided in the manuscript.

Human research participants

Policy information about [studies involving human research participants](#)

Population characteristics	Twenty volunteers (among them, five were 25–32 years old, and five 60–68 years old) were recruited for studies on normal healthy skin without any skin lesions. Five patients (age 25–35) with skin disorders such as plaque psoriasis were involved in studies with measurements on lesioned skin. Gender or other information for these participants were randomized.
Recruitment	Participation was fully voluntary, and all subjects provided informed consent before the tests.

Ethics oversight

The research protocol was approved by Northwestern University's Institutional Review Board and the Northwestern Memorial Hospital, USA (Protocol Number: STU00206331-CR003).

Note that full information on the approval of the study protocol must also be provided in the manuscript.

Clinical data

Policy information about [clinical studies](#)

All manuscripts should comply with the ICMJE [guidelines for publication of clinical research](#) and a completed [CONSORT checklist](#) must be included with all submissions.

Clinical trial registration

The research protocol was registered on ClinicalTrials.gov (Registration Number: NCT03461549).

Study protocol

The full trial protocol can be accessed at <https://clinicaltrials.gov/ct2/show/NCT03461549>.

Data collection

The sensors were mounted onto the relevant skin areas. The placement of the sensors was carried out by research staff and/or medical doctors. The EMM sensors were pre-connected to a DAQ system (including a locking-in amplifier and a current source) located within the operational room. Data recording began after 10 s of system warm-up, to ensure stable operation. Each subject performed 1-min measurement in a resting position. Data were collected and stored for further data analysis on a tablet computer.

Outcomes

Primary outcome measure: measurement results based on modulus sensor.
Secondary outcome measures: Visual analogue scale of skin irritation.