



Nickel Allergy

Your child has been diagnosed with an allergy to nickel. An allergy to nickel is common, and can develop at any age. Nickel allergies usually do not go away.

What are the symptoms?

An allergy to nickel causes a rash on the skin. A rash often starts on the belly where the skin comes in contact with metal buttons on pants, or anywhere the skin comes in contact with jewelry such as earrings, watches, or rings. Your child can get a rash all over their body, even though just certain areas of their skin come in contact with nickel.

To Learn More

- Dermatology
206-987-2158
- Ask your child's healthcare provider
- www.seattlechildrens.org

Free Interpreter Services

- In the hospital, ask your child's nurse.
- From outside the hospital, call the toll-free Family Interpreting Line 1-866-583-1527. Tell the interpreter the name or extension you need.
- For Deaf and hard of hearing callers 206-987-2280 (TTY).

Where is nickel found?

Nickel is found in many metal and metal-plated objects, including:

- Clothing with metal buttons or zippers
- Bra hooks
- Belt buckles
- Coins
- Costume jewelry
- Kitchen utensils
- Watches
- White gold

Nickel is also found in certain foods. If your child's allergy is severe they may need to avoid foods rich in nickel such as peas and beans, nuts and grains.

How can I test something for nickel?

Kits are available that will test for nickel using the dimethylglyoxime test. You can buy kits online at www.delasco.com or ask your pharmacist.

How can I prevent my child from getting a rash?

The best way to prevent a rash is to avoid all contact with nickel. You can also:

- Look for clothing without metal buttons, snaps, and zippers. Try painting several layers of clear nail polish on any metal that cannot be avoided. This works for some children, but not for others.
- Avoid jewelry with nickel. Other options are aluminum, nickel-free stainless steel, sterling silver, titanium, platinum, and yellow gold (14 karat or more).
- Limit your child's contact with metal items that may contain nickel such as coins, keys, cellphones, eyeglasses, doorknobs, handles, utensils, etc.

Seattle Children's offers interpreter services for Deaf, hard of hearing or non-English speaking patients, family members and legal representatives free of charge. Seattle Children's will make this information available in alternate formats upon request. Call the Family Resource Center at 206-987-2201.

This handout has been reviewed by clinical staff at Seattle Children's. However, your child's needs are unique. Before you act or rely upon this information, please talk with your child's healthcare provider.

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