

Nickel Allergy

Your child has been diagnosed with an allergy to nickel. Nickel allergies are common, can start at any age and 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 touches metal buttons on pants, or anywhere the skin touches jewelry such as earrings, watches or rings. Sweating can make it worse. Your child can get a rash all over their body, even if small areas of their skin touch nickel.

Where is nickel found?

Many metal and metal-plated objects contain nickel, including:

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

Some foods have nickel. Though rare, if your child's allergy is severe enough they may need to avoid foods rich in nickel such as peas, 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 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.

- Look for clothing without metal buttons, snaps and zippers. Use nickel free belts. Try painting several layers of clear nail polish on any metal that cannot be avoided on clothing or use iron on patches over the metal.
 - Wear eyeglass frames made from titanium or plastic.
 - Avoid jewelry with nickel. Other options are surgical grade stainless steel, pure sterling silver, titanium, platinum, silicone. Note that white and yellow gold can contain nickel.
 - Limit your child's contact with metal items that may contain nickel such as coins, keys, cellphones, eyeglasses, doorknobs, handles, utensils, etc.
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To Learn More

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

Free Interpreter Services

- In the hospital, ask your 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.



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Seattle Children's offers free interpreter services for patients, family members and legal representatives who are deaf or hard of hearing or speak a language other than English. 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 needs are unique. Before you act or rely upon this information, please talk with your healthcare provider.

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