



Earring Allergy

Contact allergic dermatitis to earrings (nickel allergy) is a very common problem and the number one allergic condition in women and in female children and infants who have pierced ears. It is important to understand the nature of the condition and the “reaction patterns” of this particular allergen so that preventive measures can be used on a regular basis.

An allergic sensitivity to nickel is often confused for an infection because it often presents as a weeping, oozing and pustular reaction. The lymph nodes may be swollen, and itching is almost always present. The reaction will worsen if one continues to wear earrings with metal posts or clips containing nickel.

True allergic sensitivity to gold is unusual.

Helpful Hints for Nickel Sensitive Individuals:

- Never apply ear jewelry to an irritated or inflamed earlobe because the rash will continue to worsen.
- Do not sleep, bathe or swim while wearing earrings.
- When wearing pierced earrings, try to use ones with gold posts. If you have a nickel allergy, use plastic discs to secure the earring to the post. If these are not available, cover the clip with scotch tape or use a thin baby button or a sequin between the ear skin and the clip so that the metal is never in contact with the ears.
- Paint the post and clip with clear nail polish.

Helpful Hints for Treatment of Earlobe Sensitivity:

- Gently wash inflamed earlobe with warm soapy water and rinse well.
- Remove any skin debris or crusts, but do not force crusts off.
- Apply your prescription cream or ointment.
- Do not wear any earrings (pierced or clip-ons) until the lobe has completely healed.

For Questions or Emergency Care:

Call the office at **601-815-3374**. You may need to speak with the doctor on-call.