

## “ET” Material Allergic Contact Dermatitis

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### PRECIS

Sources of nickel allergy can be missed, as in our unusual case of contact dermatitis to nickel.

### DISCUSSION

A 31-year-old physicist presented to our clinic with an 8-week history of erythematous and itchy plaques on his wedding ring finger and on his belly, behind his belt buckle. He was in good health with a history of atopic dermatitis and allergic rhinitis.

Patch tests were performed with the European standard series (Hermal; Reinbek, Germany) and preservatives series. The readings were done on days 2 and 4. On days 2 and 4, the reading was positive (+++) to nickel(II) sulfate. The test confirmed contact dermatitis to nickel.

The patient changed his belts, and improvement was noted on his aforementioned abdominal skin. This was not the case for his finger. Later it was discovered that his ring was made out of a type of meteorite iron called Gibeon, which was bought from a specialized boutique in Paris, France.

Dimethylglyoxime test (Chemotechnique Diagnostics, Vellinge, Sweden) was done to identify the presence of nickel in his ring, and the result was positive.

The dermatitis resolved once he stopped wearing his ring and avoided contact with objects containing nickel.

Nickel is widely used for many purposes and is found in the alloy of different metals found in nature. It is known to be very sensitizing (especially with cheap jewelry and coins). Its principal sources are ores and iron-nickel meteorites.<sup>1</sup> In this case, the ring was made of a meteorite material. It is composed of nickel-iron alloy and contains copper and phosphorus. This meteorite was found in Namibia in 1836 and was named Gibeon in reference to the village nearest to where it was found. It is classified in the iron meteorite class and is used for different purposes such as making tools, weapons, and jewelry.<sup>2</sup> The unique and seamless ring made by this meteorite makes it attractive for certain consumers. It is also known to be stable and beautiful, and the fact that it is brought from the “cosmos” makes it distinguished and desired.

Many people ignore the composition of meteorite and are unaware of its harmful effects on the skin. However, it is important to remember that allergens are found in the environment and even what is called “natural” should be investigated, if needed.

### ZEBRA

Meteorite, as a source of nickel, has yet to be reported in the literature.

### REFERENCES

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