

Nickel sensitivity: a clinical and allergic study of 100 patients in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

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Abstract

Objectives: The aim of this study is to present some of the clinical and allergic features of nickel sensitivity in patients from the Riyadh area and to compare the data with similar studies from other regions. **Methods:** Out of 320 patients, 100 patients gave a positive patch test to nickel sulfate alone or in association with other allergens. These were included in this analysis. The patients were patch-tested with the European standard series which included nickel sulfate 5% in petrolatum. **Results:** Of the 320 patients, 100 (31.3%) showed a positive reaction to nickel sulfate either alone (43=13.4%) or in association with other allergens (57=17.8%). In the first group who reacted to nickel sulfate alone, there were 6 men and 27 women (ratio 1:6.2). In the second group there were 17 men and 40 women (ratio 1:2.4). **Conclusions:** Nickel appeared to be the most common cause of contact dermatitis in this region. This is in agreement with reports from other parts of the world. Women are more commonly affected with a tendency to show single sensitivities. We suggest that all patients with hand and foot dermatitis should be tested for nickel sensitivity. Since prevention is difficult, early diagnosis seems to be the only practical measure at the present time.

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