

Eczema & a Low Nickel approach by Greta Leeson

Most individuals who have experienced eczema will know that it is a chronic condition, and often difficult to treat. While some conventional treatments exist, most serve only to help manage flares (such as topical creams) and may in fact exacerbate the condition after treatment is ceased (like cortisone ointments). Addressing eczema properly means treating the root cause, which includes immune dysfunction, poor gut health, and identifying and reducing triggers.

When it comes to treating eczema, there is no 'one-size fits all' approach. Eczema is a complex condition, often occurring alongside other atopic conditions such as asthma and hayfever, and has just as many varied triggers that differ between individuals. This can make it feel like figuring out your triggers and where to go from there is a rather impossible task.

While triggers vary, one has a common thread for most eczema sufferers; nickel.

Nickel is the number one metal allergen worldwide and affects up to 30% of adults, often going under the radar for its role in eczema. In sensitive individuals, nickel activates the immune system, which misinterprets it as a harmful substance. This means that with repeat exposure, the body will launch a response - eczema.

Although removing outright nickel triggers such as jewellery and buttons can assist, reducing nickel in the diet while your body heals is an essential part of treatment, alongside balancing the immune system and supporting the synthesis of new, healthy skin.

Reducing nickel in the diet can be tricky - it hides away in a lot of foods you may not suspect, such as coconut water, chocolate, lentils, and even oats, which have traditionally been considered very helpful for eczema sufferers (and sometimes are, if you're not sensitive to nickel!)

If you are struggling with eczema and suspect nickel sensitivity or other unidentified triggers, consulting a qualified practitioner is crucial. They can provide a personalized treatment plan to address your specific needs and triggers, potentially offering relief and improving your quality of life. This approach should be seen as complementary to conventional medical care, and open communication with your primary healthcare provider is essential.

Remember, this information is not a substitute for professional medical advice. Always consult with a qualified healthcare professional before starting any new treatment, especially if you have any underlying health conditions.