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Contact Dermatitis

Contact dermatitis represents the itching, redness, scaling, and even crusting that develops from contact with a chemical. There are two types: primary irritant dermatitis and secondary Allergic dermatitis.

Primary Irritant Dermatitis

This is the result of a chemical that will cause dermatitis on everyone who comes in contact with it. Examples are soap, when the skin is scrubbed too much, or bleach, if it is allowed to remain for some time.



Irritant Dermatitis due to scrubbing with Soap

Secondary Allergic Dermatitis

This occurs after repeated exposure to an allergen. When the skin is exposed to the contactant, an allergic response may develop.

Paraphenylenediamine (PPD) is used in hair dye, as the color will last after many shampoos. It is also both a dye and rubber



Shoe Dermatitis due to PPD



Patch Testing Panels

accelerator found in shoes and sneakers. Sometimes, the chemical is not immediately leached out of the footwear.

Another common allergen is nickel, which is added to strengthen silver and gold jewelry. Gold that is 18 CT may have very little nickel, and rose gold has copper as the alloy. Sometimes, the nickel is only leached out, when the skin is moist from sweating. Platinum and stainless steel usually can be worn instead.



Allergic Response to Tattoo Ink

Latex Allergy

A serious allergic contact dermatitis is that due to latex. The rubber is used in a number of materials, ranging from the elastic in underwear to the backing of indoor/outdoor carpeting. Most hospitals are now latex-free using vinyl gloves.

Latex allergy can be very serious. People have even died from it. Being markedly allergic to latex can make someone a latex cripple. The person has to avoid public buildings, where much of the commercial carpeting has latex, or transportation, as the tires are made of latex.

Treatment

The contactant may be identified by detective work or patch testing. The dermatitis is treated

