

## Short Communication

### Sensitization to nickel from an umbilical ring

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#### Case Report

A 30-year-old female student had a 3-month history of burning, itching and red papules, most prominent in the periumbilical area and mid-abdomen. She had been wearing an umbilical ring for 5 months (Fig. 1). There

was no personal or familial history of atopy or metal intolerance. The skin lesions rapidly resolved after removal of the umbilical ring.

Patch testing was performed with the GIRDCA standard series (Trolab Hermal), using Finn Chambers on Scanpor. The patient showed positive reactions to nickel sulfate 5% pet. at D2 and D3 (++/+++).

#### Discussion

The term body piercing refers to the piercing of the ears, eyebrows, tongue, nose, septum, lip, cheek, nipples, navel or genitalia with a hollow gauge needle and the insertion, of metal jewellery. In the past decade, a surge of popular interest and involvement in the permanent body modification practices of piercing and tattooing has been evident in Europe and North America.

There are essentially 2 types of body piercing. The 1st is purely aesthetic and the effect merely visual and psychological. Navel, eyebrow, ear and nose piercing fall into this category. The 2nd category, genital piercing, provides more sensual and physiological pleasure. Body piercing has long been a spiritual ritual, often symbolizing the death of an unpleasant memory or part of one's life. Many young people are now piercing their bodies simply for adornment, or in emulation of African, Indian or Polynesian body ornamentation. This involves a clear risk of nickel sensitization, previously found in 14.8% of those with pierced ears as compared to 1.8% of those without (1–3).

#### References

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Fig. 1. Dermatitis most prominent in the periumbilical area.