

Nickel is a metal used to make jewelry, coins, stainless steel, and other industrial products. Skin reactions from these products (e.g. jewelry, belt buckles) are very common and include skin rashes, redness, and itching.

Trace amounts of nickel are also found in certain foods, and some individuals may react to foods having a higher nickel content. This condition is referred to as Systemic Nickel Allergy Syndrome, or SNAS.¹ SNAS can be associated with an array of symptoms including skin irritation, rashes, hand eczema, nausea, abdominal pain, diarrhea, bloating, gas and others.^{1,2}

While SNAS is not common, your functional medicine provider may suspect a nickel reaction. The amount of nickel in food varies by region and is related to the nickel content of the soil. The table below lists foods that typically have a higher nickel content. If SNAS is suspected, the following foods are those which should be considered for elimination for a period of four weeks. Please note that low-and-moderate nickel containing foods are unlikely to be a concern. Your functional medicine practitioner can provide personalized guidance on eliminating nickel-containing foods from your diet.

Category	Nickel-containing Foods ³
Grains	buckwheat, bran (all), millet, muesli, multi-grain bread, oatmeal, rice
Vegetables	asparagus, kale, leeks, lettuce, spinach, sprouts
Nuts & Seeds	almonds, cashews, hazelnuts, peanuts, sesame seeds, sunflower seeds, walnuts
Fruit	dates, figs, pineapple, plums, prunes, raspberries, rhubarb
Meat & Seafood	canned tuna, herring, mackerel, mussels, oysters, shrimp
Beans & Legumes	baked beans, chickpeas, green beans, kidney, lentils, peas, soy, white beans
Other	black tea, chocolate, soy sauce, soy protein, tofu

References

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3. Mislanakar M, Zirwas MJ. Low-nickel diet scoring system for systemic nickel allergy. *Dermatitis*. 2013 Jul-Aug;24(4):190-5. doi: 10.1097/DER.0b013e3182937e81.