Cobalt

Your patch tests indicate you have a contact allergy to cobalt. You should avoid contact with this metal in the future. Contact with the skin for more than a few minutes would be needed for your eczema or dermatitis to reoccur so it is very unlikely that you will need to avoid all the items on the following list. Concentrate on avoidance of objects with prolonged skin contact. Cobalt is found in:

- **Jewellery** (usually cheap or costume jewellery) such as necklaces, earrings, wristwatches, bracelets, piercings and hair clips. 22-carat gold and platinum are unlikely to cause problems.
- **Metal parts in clothing** such as jean studs, zips, belt buckles and fasteners, handbag and purse clasps, metal toe caps. Use accessories made of plastic, or metal covered with plastic.
- **Dental products** including orthodontic braces and retainers
- **Other personal products** such as mobile phones, laptops, electric razors, spectacle frames and cigarette lighters
- **Home environment.** There are many items in everyday use including handles on drawers and cupboards, keys, kitchen utensils, scissors, toasters, knitting needles and sewing equipment, hooks, screws, prams, pushchairs and wheelchairs.
- **Office equipment:** paperclips, staplers, scissors and pens
- **Pigment**. Blue pigment in crayons, leathers, cosmetics, pottery glazes and some blue tattoos.
- **Cements.** May be found in some cements
- **Industrial** including electroplating, welding, sheet metals, circuit boards, machine lathes and saws. Cobalt naphthalate and cobalt oleate are used as drying agents in printing inks, putty, varnishes and paints. Found in wet clay and used in glass manufacture
- **Agriculture** such as chemical fertilisers and animal feed additive
- **Joint prostheses and metal fixing plates and screws.** Many people with cobalt allergy have no problems with a prosthesis containing cobalt. Speak to your orthopaedic surgeon about your allergy if surgery is planned
- **Vitamin B12** tablets and injections

A testing kit can be purchased to test objects for cobalt