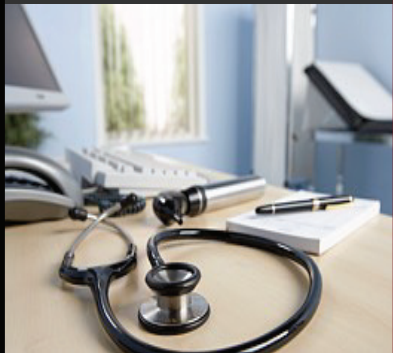




All your local doctors in one convenient location



**GET TO KNOW YOUR LOCAL DOCTORS**

**North County Dermatology Center**

Specialty: Dermatology

North County Dermatology Center's priority is to deliver quality care to informed patients in a comfortable and convenient setting. Here you'll find a dedicated team of trained professionals who strive to give each patient individualized attention.



Dr. David Thomas and Dr. Margaret Hobson Dupree believe that informed patients are better prepared to make decisions regarding their health and well-being. They offer a full array of dermatological services, including: acne, basic skin treatments, Mohs surgery, moles, psoriasis, skin cancers and more.

To learn more about North County Dermatology Center, or to schedule an appointment, visit [www.northcountyderm.com](http://www.northcountyderm.com) or call (760) 230-2805.



**NORTH COAST HEALTH CENTER**

477 N. EL CAMINO REAL  
ENCINITAS, CA 92024

For more than 25 years, physicians and dentists at North Coast Health Center have been providing highly personalized care to coastal north San Diego County. With more than 250 physicians and dentists to choose from, North Coast Health Center patients have access to primary care, a surgery center, pharmacy, lab, imaging, and over 45 medical and dental specialties all in one convenient location.

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[www.NorthCoastHealthCenter.com](http://www.NorthCoastHealthCenter.com)



Ask the **EXPERT** 2015

**PROTECT YOUR SKIN:**

EXPLORING THE LINK BETWEEN WEARABLE FITNESS TECHNOLOGY AND CONTACT DERMATITIS

**What is Contact Dermatitis?** Contact dermatitis is characterized by an itchy inflamed rash that can occur anywhere on the body. It is caused by an allergic reaction to a substance that comes into contact with the skin.

As more fitness enthusiasts turn to wearable technology to track their jogs, workouts and vital signs, the risk of contact dermatitis can become an issue.

The professional dermatologists at San Diego's newest dermatology clinic North County Dermatology Center, who themselves wear these fitness devices, are here to help.

Dr. Margaret Hobson Dupree and Dr. David Thomas are the center's dermatologists who combined, have over 40 years of dermatology experience. Both received their medical degrees from the Uniformed Services University in Bethesda, Md. They have strong ties to the San Diego area, including Dr. Thomas' background as Director of Medical Services and Chief of the Medical Staff at the Naval Hospital at Camp Pendleton.

Dermatologists have noticed an uptick in the number of contact dermatitis cases related to fitness bracelets or watches that keep track of various health and workout metrics.

Some consumers wearing 24-hour fitness tracking wristbands have developed contact dermatitis, a red itchy rash caused by an allergy. These types of reactions are developing in response to various materials in the wrist bands including nickel in the metal, as well as rubber and rubber accelerants used in the casings and clasps of these types of devices.

"People may not realize that one of the most common forms of contact dermatitis is a metal allergy," Dr. Thomas said. "Nickel is the most prevalent of all metal allergens and is found in many household items."

Most metals contain some amount of nickel, with costume jewelry and cell phones among the leading causes of allergic reactions.

The affected skin becomes itchy, red and can become, over the course of a few days to a week or more, scaly and inflamed and sometimes even blister.

Allergic reaction skin rashes often require evaluation and treatment by a board-certified dermatologist who can determine the source of the rash and recommend the best treatment.

"There are two ways to prevent a rash caused by contact dermatitis," Dr. Dupree said. "Stop wearing the device, wear the device more loosely around the skin, or put a barrier between the product and the skin, such as a gauze pad or clear nail polish."

Dr. Thomas and Dr. Dupree say there are simple, effective treatments for contact dermatitis. They include:

- Over-the-counter and prescription topical corticosteroids
- Systemic corticosteroids (given orally or by injection) rarely for severe rashes
- Moisturizers, particularly creams that provide more persistent moisturizing effects than lotions, for preventing further dryness and irritation

"We want people to know that when they see a red rash occurring on the wrist or arm to realize that they could be experiencing an allergic reaction," Dr. Thomas said. "Ignoring it and hoping it goes away on its own can make the problem become progressively worse."

Additional information about contact dermatitis and allergic skin reactions can be found by visiting the American Academy of Dermatology, [www.aad.org](http://www.aad.org).

For more information, visit [www.northcountyderm.com](http://www.northcountyderm.com)

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