

Eczema



Eczema is a chronic inflammatory skin condition believed to be caused by a defective skin barrier. It is characterized by dry, itchy skin that presents as red scaly patches, moist lesions or sores. While any region of the body may be affected, in children and adults, eczema typically occurs on the face, neck, and the insides of the elbows, knees, and ankles. In infants, eczema typically occurs on the forehead, cheeks, forearms, legs, scalp, and neck. Eczema is often called the “itch that rashes” because itching occurs and a skin rash appears from the scratching.

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DERMATOLOGY

COSMETIC

ESTHETIC

MEDICAL

SURGICAL

NUTRITION TIPS:

Drink lots of water, more than eight glasses a day to help hydrate your skin. Make non-acidic fruits and vegetables a part of an eczema diet ~ these food items contain vitamins, minerals and enzymes your body can rapidly utilize to heal your skin. Be a detective to determine your food triggers. The most common food triggers for eczema are wheat, cow's milk, shellfish, peanuts, eggs, soy, corn, food with added sugar and food preservatives such as MSG. Possible supplements include flaxseed, primrose oil and zinc. Avoid processed foods. Pre-packaged foods and fast foods generally contain ingredients and chemicals that make eczema worse.

SKIN CARE TIPS:

Treatments aim to reduce inflammation, relieve itching and prevent future flare-ups. Keep your skin moisturized at all times. Use advanced deep moisturizers to increase hydration levels in the skin by 50% and use continuously for relief. Solutions can be applied when the skin is damp, such as after bathing, to help the skin retain moisture. Cold compresses may also relieve itching. Oatmeal-based cleansing bars may be used as a soap replacement. Use lukewarm rather than hot water when showering. Avoid exposing your skin to very cold or hot air. Over-the-counter anti-itch creams and other self-care measures may help mild conditions. Various potency corticosteroid creams or ointments may be prescribed to ease scaling and relieve itching. If itching is severe, oral antihistamines may help. Antibiotics may be necessary if you have a bacterial skin infection or an open sore or fissure caused by scratching. For more severe cases, oral corticosteroids, such as prednisone, or an intramuscular injection of corticosteroids will reduce inflammation and control symptoms. These medications are effective, but cannot be used long term. Immunomodulators such as Protopic and Elidel help reduce inflammation and reduce flares. Keratolytics may help break down dead, thickened skin and remove flakes and heavy crusted skin.

BREAK THE ITCH ~ SCRATCH CYCLE:

Scratching can actually trigger eczematous rashes. Initial mild itching makes you want to itch but scratching damages the skin, worsens inflammation, irritates skin nerves and leads to even greater itching. This cycle aggravates and prolongs all these rashes. The best defense is to reduce the dry skin that triggers the urge to scratch.

IF IT IS WET, DRY IT. IF IT IS DRY, WET IT:

Gels work to dry out moist or oozing skin. Lotions and creams are for neutral or slightly dry skin and ointments are the best for "wetting" extremely dry or cracked skin problems.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

The National Eczema Association at www.nationaleczema.org

caring for the skin you're in!

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