



CENTER FOR ADVANCED AESTHETICS

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ECZEMA

Eczema, also known as Atopic Dermatitis, is a condition of the skin that mostly affects children, however can be seen in many adolescents and adults. It involves the face, scalp, and body, and usually presents with scaly, itchy, red patches. Commonly seen in infants and toddlers, eczema is related to asthma and allergies. While not always the case, most patients with eczema have a personal or family history of asthma or allergies. The exact mechanism that causes some people to develop eczema, especially in classic locations, is not fully understood. It is now believed eczema is a product of the skin's inability to retain moisture, which then leads to an inflammatory response that finally causes the redness and itching. Once again, eczema is a complicated condition. Therefore, treatment must also be multifaceted. Treatment options include topical and oral steroids, non-steroidal immunomodulators, antihistamines to control the itch, and good old-fashioned emollients.

TO BATHE OR NOT TO BATHE?

The first principle of eczema treatment is to retain moisture. Therefore many dermatologists believe that by bathing every day, you are stripping your body's natural oils. Although this is true, there are ways to avoid depleting your oils while still enjoying a daily bath. I recommend a daily bath in warm water. However, upon exiting the bathtub, it is important to apply a moisturizer ***directly on wet skin***. This way, you are sealing in the water you bathed with into your skin, a so called "water sandwich". The moisturizer you use must also be a ***thick emollient***, such as Vaseline Petroleum Jelly (inexpensive, no dyes, no perfumes), Aquaphor, Eucerin, or my favorite Crisco (yes, the cooking oil). All of these products may be found in a drug store or supermarket. If you are skeptical, try it for three days, I guarantee that you will see a difference.

TO FIGHT INFLAMMATION:

Steroid ointments are the mainstay in the treatment of eczema. They work by decreasing inflammation. They work wonders; however, their use is limited by their side effects, namely ***causing thinning of the skin after prolonged use***. I like to use steroid ointments as a temporary measure for 2 to 4 weeks to combat any flares of eczema. Then once under control I taper the use to once weekly and add a nonsteroidal cream, such as Elidel or Protopic, which can then be used as maintenance therapy. Injectable medications such as Dupixent and Abdry give us a new weapon to fight eczema in a safe and effective manner. The newest line of medications used to treat eczema are called JAK inhibitors. Opezlura is one such topical cream used to decrease inflammation. Oral meds are also available and useful for patients with severe disease.

TO FIGHT ITCH:

Antihistamines help to block the release of a substance called histamine in your body. Histamine is normally let go during an inflammatory attack and causes us to feel the sensation of itch. Antihistamines come in two varieties, sedating and non-sedating. Commonly used sedating antihistamines are Benadryl (Diphenhydramine), Atarax (Hydroxyzine), and sometimes Zyrtec (Cetirizine). Non-sedating ones include Claritin (Over the Counter), Clarinex, and Allegra. They both work to decrease itching, inflammation, and allergic reactions.

BACTERIA:

Once the skin barrier is broken, bacterial and viral infections are a possibility. It is important to keep the skin clean (another reason to favor the daily bath). If necessary, oral antibiotics or antivirals are prescribed to combat infection. An infected area of the skin has less chance to heal without scarring. Oral antibiotics also help to control inflammation, and there also help with eczema. Signs for you to look out for regarding infected eczema are warm, weeping, oozing, or pus-filled lesions.

*There are a variety of medications used to control eczema.
Together with Dr. Shah & her colleagues, you can develop a regimen that is right for you.*



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ECZEMA

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. Bathe daily with warm water, using Dove Unscented soap only in axilla and genital areas. Immediately upon exiting the bath, do not towel dry. Instead apply the following products to your body on top of the wet skin. Rub gently into your skin. If necessary, pat dry with a towel. Creams, heavy thick ones are superior to lotions in treating eczema.

☐ Aquaphor Ointment	☐ Aveeno Eczema itch Relief Balm	☐ Lipikar Balm by La Roche Posay
☐ Cetaphil Moisturizer	☐ Eucerin Cream	☐ Gold Bond Diabetic
☐ Other: _____		

2. Apply the following steroid ointment for the time period indicated. These products will help control any recent flares.

MED	VEHICLE	FREQUENCY	DURATION	TAPER TO
☐ Clobetasol	☐ Ointment	☐ Daily	☐ For one week	☐ Once daily
☐ Betamethasone	☐ Cream	☐ Twice Daily	☐ For two weeks	☐ Twice weekly
☐ Mometasone	☐ Solution	☐ Three times daily	☐ For one month	☐ Other: _____
☐ Fluticasone	☐ Lotion	☐ Three times weekly	☐ Other: _____	
☐ Fluocinolone		☐ Other: _____		
☐ Triamcinolone				
☐ Hydrocortisone 2.5%				
☐ Other: _____				

Try to use emollients such as the ones in Number 1, as often as you can (two to three times a day to affected areas).

3. Nonsteroidal Immunomodulators work in the same manner as steroids, but without the side effects of skin thinning. The most common ones are Protopic Ointment and Elidel Cream. Although mostly well tolerated, some people complain of burning and stinging with the application of these creams for the first three days. This is how you are to use them:

☐ Protopic Oint 0.03%, 0.1%	☐ Daily	☐ For one week
☐ Elidel Cream or Pimecrolimus	☐ Twice Daily	☐ For two weeks
☐ Eucrisa	☐ Other: _____	☐ For one month
☐ Opzelura		

4. Antihistamines are to be taken mostly at night, unless otherwise directed by your doctor.

Treatments

Usage

☐ Zyrtec	☐ 5 mg	☐ 10 mg	☐ Daily
☐ Benadryl	☐ 25 mg		☐ Twice Daily
☐ Hydroxyzine	☐ 10 mg	☐ 25 mg	☐ At night
☐ Claritin	☐ 10 mg		☐ Weekly
☐ Allegra	☐ 60 mg	☐ 180 mg	☐ Other: _____

5. Antibiotics to take by mouth if necessary:

☐ Keflex	☐ Amoxicillin	☐ Cefadroxil	☐ Other
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