

TREAT ECZEMA NATURALLY..

Anyone who suffers from eczema knows all about the rashes, itchiness, and discomfort of this distressing skin condition.

If you, or a loved one, suffer from eczema and have tried all that medicine has to offer, then read on to discover how improving your diet can help...

Eczema is a distressing condition usually associated with babies and young children, but many thousands of adults also suffer from it. Most cases are caused by an allergic reaction triggered by house dust mites.

Types of Eczema:

There are several types of eczema, but the most common ones are:

- *Infantile (atopic) eczema* – caused by an allergic reaction and affects young babies between two and eighteen months, covering the face, head, scalp, and spreading to the hands and limbs, particularly where the skin has folds or is rubbed by clothing.
- *Contact Eczema* – caused by an allergic reaction to a substance coming into contact with the skin.

Symptoms

- Red rash
- Scaling and blisters.
- Very itchy rashes
- Weeping sores which can become infected.
- Rashes can appear anywhere on the skin (not contagious)

Causes

The causes of eczema are often not easy to pinpoint. Apart from contact with harsh chemicals, the most likely causes seem to be an allergy to a food or other substances. In infants, for example, it can sometimes be traced to a reaction to cow's milk.

People affected by eczema often suffer from hay fever or asthma, or come from families prone to these allergies.

Stress and tension may also be contributory factors.

Action plan

The liver plays a major role in ridding the body of toxins that may cause skin conditions. It is therefore important to maintain a healthy liver when treating eczema.

In order to detoxify your liver cut out all alcohol, saturated fats and confectionary for ten days. The response can be remarkable.

An intensive seven-day cleansing diet - consisting of fresh fruit and fresh vegetable juices including raw beetroot, carrots, apples and celery - will help to detoxify the body. Also drink dandelion tea. After your seven day 'cleansing' period increase your intake of fatty fish such as mackerel, herring, salmon, and sardines.

AVOID

- Avoid common allergens such as cows' milk, eggs, fish, cheese, food additives and sugar. Eat instead foods such as chicken, vegetables, fruit and rice.
- Reduce animal fat intake from dairy produce, red meat and fried foods.

- Cut out citrus fruits, wheat, peanuts, radishes, dairy products and replace with soya milk and low-fat and non-dairy products (e.g. tofu, rice milk, etc.).
- Avoid stimulants like tea, coffee, cigarettes, sugar, chocolate and alcohol.

INCREASE

- Eat more dark green vegetables like cabbage, watercress, courgettes and broccoli, wholegrains, beans, lentils, vegetables and fruits.
- Add good dietary oils to your diet. Include high-quality sunflower, safflower or linseed oil in the diet. Every day add 2 teaspoons of Omega Flax Oil or Udo's Oil to your salads. It promotes healthier skin and reduces allergic tendencies.
- Include plenty of pumpkin and sunflower seeds in your diet, as they contain essential fatty acids and zinc to help repair the skin. Many eczema sufferers have low levels of zinc and essential fatty acids, which are vital for healing skin and maintaining its quality and health.

What helps?

- Magnesium and B₆ – their deficiencies are often implicated in pre-menstrual symptoms and may cause allergic symptoms. They should be considered if any allergy problem (including eczema) is worse premenstrually. Magnesium-rich foods include beans, lentils, avocado, almonds/cashews, oatmeal, dark green vegetables, potato, legumes, and seafood.
- Zinc and B vitamins - deficiencies of zinc and B vitamins may be particularly important, as they affect the metabolism of essential fatty acids, a lack of which may contribute to the development of dry skin and eczema. Correction of such deficiencies with the use of evening primrose oil and, where necessary, an exclusion diet, can be very effective, both in adult and childhood eczema. Foods rich in B-vitamins include wholegrains, beans, peas, nuts, brown rice, seafood, green leafy vegetables, and lentils. And Zinc is found in foods such as brazil nuts, pecans, pumpkin seeds, poultry, and shellfish.
- Also helpful is Aloe Vera ointment applied to the site of the rash. Aloe Vera gel can be found in health food shops.

NOTE: Consult your health care provider before embarking on any diet or supplement programme.

Baby Eczema

If your baby suffers from eczema, you may find the following suggestions helpful:

- o Talk to your paediatrician about cow's milk substitutes. Infant eczema is very often related to a reaction to cow's milk or to substances in formula milk such as sugar and colourings. Consider goat's milk or soya-based milk instead.
- o If the baby has been weaned on solid foods too early (i.e. before 4 months of age), he may develop an allergy as the immune system has not yet properly developed to cope with solid foods and foreign proteins.
- o If the baby is already on solid foods, continue with that but avoid allergenic and inflammatory foods such as wheat, eggs, red meat, peanuts and citrus fruits.
- o Give the baby food that is fresh and natural (preferably organic), that is free from chemicals, pesticides, additives, preservatives and colourings.
- o Chamomile - give the baby cooled chamomile tea to drink. And add chamomile flowers or a chamomile tea bag to the baby's bath.
- o Evening primrose oil - add 1 teaspoon to the baby's food. Do not subject this oil to heat. Also apply evening primrose oil externally to the skin.
- o Avoid any known allergens such as dust, animal hair or pollen.
- o If there is a family history of atopic eczema (asthma, hay fever, migraine), all known allergens should preferably be avoided by both parents prior to conception and by the mother during pregnancy and lactation.

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