

Maintenance Program

EMOLLIENTS

These keep dry skin moisturised and lubricated and are essential to minimise itchiness. Each person with eczema should have a separate supply of emollient, to avoid cross-infection.

- Use frequently, especially when the skin feels dry and itchy
- Apply with clean hands
- Gently apply a thin even layer, taking care not to rub the skin too hard as this can set off itching
- Use the dot method for thick preparations. Apply small amounts where required, starting from the top downwards. Smooth in gently

BATHING

- Use suitable soap alternatives
- Bath oils may aid in moisturising
- Use lukewarm water
- Do not use bubble bath
- Avoid perfumed toiletries

CLOTHING

- Cotton and/or bamboo is preferred
- Avoiding wool and certain synthetics is advisable
- Wear loose fitting clothing to avoid aggravation from friction caused by seams and fabric

ITCHING

- Keep fingernails short
- Keep skin cool
- Avoid overtiredness and stress

PHARMACEUTICAL/MEDICAL TREATMENTS

Topical Steroids

Topical steroids are steroids applied to the skin and act to reduce inflammation.

Oral Steroids

These can be prescribed in very severe cases when topical steroids have been found to be ineffective.

Antihistamines

Can aid in reducing itchiness and help with sleep.

Antibiotics

People with eczema may sometimes need a course of antibiotics even with only a mild infection.

Immunosuppressants

There are several of these prescription drugs on the market, both oral & topical types. The oral drugs are usually used by those with very severe eczema which has not responded to other treatments. The topical treatments (or those applied to the skin) are used for mild to severe cases.

Bandaging

People with severe eczema may have special 'wet wrap' bandages or clothing that can assist in reducing itchiness and aid in healing lesions.

Therapeutic Silk Garments with Antimicrobial

The smooth fibres of Medical Silk can promote healing to the irritated skin and the Antimicrobial™ acts by killing the bacteria that causes infections on the surface of the skin.

ECZEMA ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALASIA INC

PO Box 1784 CLEVELAND QLD 4163
Website: eczema.org.au • Email: help@eczema.org
Telephone: 1300 300 182

MEMBERSHIP

(Annual Family Membership \$39)

Benefits of Membership

- Eczema Quarterly Magazine with tips, information & details of the latest products on the market.
- Free samples of products.
- Social Register (optional) - You can get in touch with people in your area and arrange, for example, a coffee morning.
- Information Sheets: Covering a wide range of topics and help for the condition of eczema & its difficulties.
- We are here to discuss your condition with you so you know you are not alone.
- We have access to the top Dermatologists and Natural Therapists in the country for help and information.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Social Register

Media Availability

Sufferer's Name _____

Applicant's Name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

I enclose my cheque payable to the **ECZEMA ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALASIA INC.** PO Box 1784 DC CLEVELAND QLD 4163.

or please charge my: Mastercard Visa Card

American Express Diners Club

Card Number:

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PRIVACY ACT: Membership information collected is stored on our electronic database, which is password protected, and in our lockable filing cabinet. No information is distributed to a third party without your express permission, eg. for our social register and with the exception of any information is required by our professional advisers such as solicitors, accountants & auditors.



caring for your
eczema

THE ECZEMA ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALASIA INC

(EAA) is an independent Australasian wide organisation. The EAA was founded in January 1994 as a non-profit registered charity and relies on memberships and donations along with corporate sponsorship to achieve its aims. The Association's purpose is:

- To support and educate eczema sufferers and their carers;
- To improve and broaden the availability of medical treatment and supplies for eczema sufferers;
- To greatly increase public awareness of all aspects of eczema and its impact.

The EAA, working with a range of medical practitioners and pharmaceutical companies, offers a comprehensive range of services to its members and is a valuable source of knowledge and advice on a wide range of issues associated with the management and treatment of eczema. Its association with Medical Professionals ensures up-to-date information is available.

• 1300 300 182 • www.eczema.org.au •

What is ECZEMA?

Eczema, or dermatitis as it is sometimes called, is a very distressing condition which results in dry, inflamed and sometimes weeping or infected skin, affecting not just individuals but families and friends, often placing enormous pressure on those involved.

Eczema is not infectious but may become infected. It is an extremely itchy condition that causes the sufferer great discomfort. The condition can flare and subside for no apparent reason.

Atopic eczema is the most common form affecting Australians. Atopic eczema occurs in all age groups. However, it often has its onset in babies between 2-6 months of age and usually improves with age.

Eczema in its many forms and degrees of severity affects up to 30% of the Australian population at some time of life. There are many different types of eczema and although it can sometimes look unpleasant, eczema is not contagious.

With treatment, the inflammation of eczema can be reduced, though the skin will always be sensitive to flare ups and need extra care.

AGGRAVATING FACTORS:

EXTERNAL

- Tobacco smoke
- Pets (ie cats, dogs, birds) - fur, feathers or dander
- Dustmites
- Soaps, shampoos, washing powders
- Certain synthetics & woollen material
- Grasses, pollens & moulds
- Sand
- Chlorinated water
- Some cosmetics & toiletries
- Nickel (only if specific allergy present)
- Air conditioning
- Overheating
- Stress
- Weather conditions (ie hot & humid or cold & dry weather)

INTERNAL

- Dairy products
- Citrus fruits
- Wheat products
- Eggs
- Nuts
- Natural Food Preservatives
- Seafood
- Chemical food additives
- Food preservatives
- Food colourings
- Stress
- Alcoholic drinks

Other Treatments

Probiotics

In clinical trials these have been shown to prevent or reduce the incidence of eczema.

Chinese Herbs

Some Chinese herbs have been found to be helpful in atopic eczema.

Naturopathic & Homeopathic Treatments

A number of sufferers have found relief from these forms of treatments.

Evening Primrose Oil

Clinical trials have shown evening primrose oil to be effective in reducing eczema symptoms in some people.

Stress Relief

There are many ways to help with stress management. The choice is very individual and may be of some use in relieving the symptoms of eczema.

Allergy Testing

Prick or blood tests may aid in establishing some trigger factors.

USEFUL TIPS

Personal

- A plastic bag filled with ice cubes held next to the skin can help relieve itching
- Avoid stuffed toys which harbour dustmites
- Ventilate house as often as possible
- Keep cool and avoid hot, humid places

Clothing

- Wear loose fitting 100% cotton and/or bamboo clothing
- Unpick name tags from clothing
- Wearing of mittens by children may help to stop them scratching
- Use rubber gloves with cotton liners

Home

- Use 100% cotton or bamboo bedding and change regularly
- Avoid feather filled pillows
- If possible avoid sleeping on the lower bunk of bunk beds
- Use dustmite protective mattress and pillow covers
- Damp dust to minimise dust particles in the air
- Keep furniture and fittings simple and easy to clean
- Place a sheet of cotton or bamboo on a chair before sitting to help stop the backs of legs from being hot and itchy
- Place a cotton or bamboo sheet on carpets to keep aggravation to a minimum
- The above suggestions are not to be regarded as medical advice
- These are guidelines for treating the condition of eczema.
- It is always advisable to consult your health professional.



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Commonly asked Questions & Answers

What Causes Eczema?

The causes of eczema are varied depending on the type of eczema. Atopic eczema is thought to be a hereditary condition according to research. Some people with atopic eczema are sensitive to allergens in the environment because their skin barrier is defective.

There is an excessive reaction by the immune system producing inflamed, irritated and sore skin. Associated atopic conditions include asthma and hayfever.

Other types of eczema are caused by irritants such as chemicals and detergents and allergens such as nickel. Environmental factors and stress can also play a role.

Which Type of Eczema do I have?

The first step in effective treatment of eczema is a correct diagnosis – visit your Doctor. It may be necessary to be referred to a Specialist.

Is There a Cure for Eczema?

It is the general opinion of qualified professionals who deal with eczema that there is no known cure unless it is an allergic eczema and the substance is avoided, eg nickel. However, research continues to shed new light on the condition.

Are Steroid Creams Safe to Use?

Steroid Creams come in different strengths. As long as the steroids are used appropriately and as directed by your Doctor, the likelihood of side effects is very rare. Reported side effects have been largely due to the use of very potent steroid preparations over a long period of time.

Can Changing Diet Help?

The role of diet in the management of eczema is unclear. Generally, changes in diet are only considered by health professionals in severe cases when conventional treatments are failing. Sometimes dietary changes can be quite helpful in keeping eczema under control. When considering altering the diet it is important to seek advice from a dietitian or nutritional therapist to ensure adequate nutrition.

Will My Child Grow Out of Their Eczema?

There are no guarantees that a child will grow out of eczema. However, research has shown that 60-70% of children are virtually clear of the condition by the time they reach their mid-teens.

Should I Get My Child Immunised?

To avoid any possible complications from vaccination, discuss the eczema patient's condition with your Doctor. However, the usual childhood immunisations generally pose no problem.

How Can I Help Myself, or My Child, to Manage Eczema?

There are many ways to minimise the discomfort and distress which eczema can bring, the foundation of which is an effective skin care routine. Eczema is a highly individual condition and what works for one sufferer may not be suitable for another.

In closing, remember eczema is a part of your life not your whole life.

