

What is Eczema (Atopic Dermatitis)?

Eczema is a skin condition that can cause itchy, rough rashes.



WHAT DOES ECZEMA LOOK AND FEEL LIKE?

Eczema can happen anywhere on your body. It usually happens on the face, scalp, and the inside of the elbows, knees, ankles, and hands. Your skin can feel very itchy and can become dry and rough. Sometimes the skin can also form blisters and become red.

TREATMENT FOR ECZEMA

AVOID TRIGGERS

Many patients notice that certain things make their eczema worse. Try to avoid these triggers. Some common triggers include:

- ❑ Frequent showers or baths
- ❑ Heat
- ❑ Dry air
- ❑ Stress
- ❑ Certain soaps or detergents
- ❑ Foods you are sensitive to



KEEP SKIN MOIST

Oily skin creams, called ointments, work best to keep the skin from getting dry. Lotions also work. Try an ointment or lotion that is "hypoallergenic" and does not have added scents.

Use your ointment twice a day. Always use it right after taking a bath or shower.

PRESCRIPTION CREAMS

Your doctor may prescribe creams or ointments for your eczema.

- ❑ Steroid creams: There are different strengths of these creams and ointments. Make sure to follow your doctor's instructions.
- ❑ Topical calcineurin inhibitors: These creams and ointments are usually only used when steroid creams and other lifestyle treatments don't work.

TRY TAKING PROBIOTICS

- ❑ Probiotics are bacteria that are good for your health. Probiotics are naturally in yogurt. You can also take probiotics as a supplement.
- ❑ Taking probiotics can help prevent and treat eczema, especially in children.

- ❑ Moms who are breastfeeding can also take probiotics to help babies with eczema.

VITAMIN D SUPPLEMENTS

Vitamin D can help with eczema, especially if your eczema tends to get worse in the winter.

FISH OIL SUPPLEMENTS

Eating fish (e.g., sardines, herring, or canned salmon) 2–4 times a week or taking fish oil can help some people with their eczema.

TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE

Traditional Chinese herbal medicine can sometimes help with eczema. If you are interested in this, look for a local traditional Chinese medicine doctor. Make sure you discuss this with your doctor also, because certain herbs can interfere with certain medications.

Acupuncture is also a part of traditional Chinese medicine. The acupuncturist puts needles in different areas of your skin. Some people find this helps their eczema.



MIND-BODY MEDICINE

Stress can make eczema worse. Mind-body medicine helps you relax. You may want to try a meditation class, a mindfulness class, hypnosis, or psychotherapy.

DIET

Some people find that changing their diet can help with eczema. If you've noticed that certain foods make your eczema worse, you may want to try an elimination diet which avoids those foods. Also make sure to avoid any foods that you know you are allergic to. Otherwise, try to eat lots of vegetables and fruits and as much fresh food as possible.



For more information, scan the QR code below, or visit nciph.org/eczema



