

Eczema – causes & considerations

Summertime is synonymous with shorter sleeves and pants. Accompanying this shorter clothing we see more eczema peeking-out from previously covered surfaces.

Eczema, also known as Atopic Dermatitis, is a dry, inflammatory skin condition most often found in patches on the flexing side of elbows and knees (but can present anywhere)... and can be frequently quite itchy.

The conventional approach to dealing with this skin issue is the topical use of creams, often containing hydrocortisone. Are they effective? ...most often Yes! Are they addressing the source of the problem? ...No.

“Why do I need to think about the source of the problem, if the cream works just fine?”

Any symptom that shows up on the skin is generally a sign of an internal imbalance. If you simply get rid of the obvious symptom, then the internal issue can continue and ultimately present itself in other ways. For example, childhood eczema that is addressed with symptom-relieving cream alone can often appear later in life as asthma.

Common causes of eczema include any of the following:

- food sensitivity; this is often a primary factor
- nutritional deficiencies; Eg. essential fatty acids, zinc, vitamins D or A, iodine
- overgrowth of *Candida albicans*; a yeast organism
- allergy to local environment
- toxicity; this may have come from mom during pregnancy
- immune dysfunction

Solutions and considerations include:

- follow an elimination diet to isolate problem foods; this can be personalized with an IgG Food Test by your naturopathic doctor (ND).
- improve efficiency of detoxification organs; kidney, liver, intestines, skin
- prevention; support healthy immune function of a child by breastfeeding exclusively for ~6 months, and then continue 1-3x daily for an additional 6-18 months.
- assess thyroid function, nutritional status, yeast overgrowth
- reduce histamine release with natural products, such as Quercetin
- use only all-natural cleaning products for body, laundry and home; visit The Environment Network at 44 Ste. Marie St. in Collingwood.

To determine which solutions would be most appropriate for you or your child, speak with your licensed ND.

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