

Dermatologist Winnipeg

Dermatologist Winnipeg - Eczema is a kind of dermatitis or inflammation of the outer layer of the skin known as the epidermis. The term comes from the Greek language and translates to "to boil over." In England, around 1 in 9 individuals or a projected 5,773,700 individuals have been diagnosed with eczema at some point in their lives. In some languages, the words dermatitis and eczema are synonymous and often the two conditions are classified together. In other languages, the word eczema implies a chronic condition and dermatitis implies an acute one.

The word generally covers different persistent skin conditions including: recurring skin dryness and rashes which is associated with at least one of the following symptoms of itching and dryness, crusting, flaking, oozing, bleeding, skin oedema or swelling and blistering. At times, temporary skin discoloration could result. Additionally, scratching open a lesion that is in the healing process may enlarge the rash and could lead to potential scarring.

Classification

Describing eczema could be confusing. It could be described by location, by possible cause or by specific appearance. Numerous sources even use the words atopic dermatitis which is the most common form of eczema and the term eczema interchangeably with can add to the confusion.

The following classifications are ordered by incidence frequency.

Common

Atopic eczema is called atopic dermatitis, infantile eczema or flexural eczema. It is an allergic disease that is believed to have a hereditary element. Atopic eczema is prominent in families with members who likewise suffer from asthma. There tends to be an itchy rash which develops on the scalp and head, the inside of elbows, on the buttocks and behind the knees. This type of eczema is rather common in developed nations. It could be difficult to differentiate between irritant contact dermatitis.

Contact dermatitis falls into two categories: irritant and allergic. Irritant dermatitis could result directly from a reaction to anything specific like for instance a detergent like sodium lauryl sulphate. Allergic dermatitis could occur as a result of a delayed reaction to some allergen such as nickel or poison ivy. Wet cement is an example of a substance that acts as both an allergen and an irritant. Phototoxic dermatitis could occur together with different substances after sunlight exposure. Around three quarters of contact eczema cases are the irritant kind. This is the most common occupational skin disease. If traces of the offending substance could be avoided and removed from one's environment, contact eczema could be curable.

There is a form of eczema which becomes worse in dry winter weather and usually affects the limbs and the trunk. It is called xerotic eczema or craquele eczema, asteatotic eczema, winter itch, pruritus hiemalis or craquelatum eczema. The itchy, tender skin resembles a cracked and dry river bed. This condition is really popular among older people. A related disorder is Ichthyosis.

Infants usually have a condition of Cradle cap, or Seborrhoeic dermatitis or Seborrheic. This condition could also be classed as a form of eczema related closely to dandruff. It causes a greasy or dry flaking of the scalp and could also affect the eyebrows, face and at times the trunk. This is considered a harmless condition except in severe conditions of cradle cap. In newborns, it presents as a yellow, crusty, thick scalp rash which is referred to as cradle cap. This particular condition has been connected to a lack of biotin and is normally curable.

Less Common Forms of Eczema

Dyshidrosis is another form of eczema which likewise goes under the names of dyshidrotic eczema, pompholyx eczema, vesicular palmoplantar dermatitis or housewife's eczema. This particular condition generally shows up on the soles, palms and sides of toes and fingers. It presents with small opaque bumps referred to as vesicles, thickening skin and cracks are accompanied by itching which becomes worse at night. This is a common form of hand eczema and it gets worse in warm conditions.

Other less common forms of eczema comprise Venous e., Discoid e., Duhring's Disease or DermaDermatitisetiformis, Autoeczematization, Neurodermatitis as well as various forms that are overlaid by viral infections. Some eczemas result from underlying disease, as in lymphoma for example. There are various other rare eczematous disorders that exist in addition to these also.

Cause

Various experts have attributed eczema to the hypothesis of hygiene. The cause of eczema, based on this theory is asthma and other allergic diseases is due to an overly clean surrounding. This particular theory is supported by epidemiologic research for asthma which states that during development it is essential to be exposed to bacteria and immune system modulators and thus, missing out on this exposure increases the risk for allergy and asthma.

Another theory suggested is that eczema is an allergic reaction to the excrement from house dust mites. Though 5% of individuals show antibodies to the mites, the hypothesis awaits further justification.

Diagnosis

Most often the diagnosis of eczema consists mainly on physical examination and history. However, various cases could need a skin biopsy.

Prevention

People suffering from eczema should not receive the smallpox vaccination because of the risk of developing eczema vaccinatum. This is a potentially severe and sometimes fatal complication.

Treatment

Due to the fact there is no known cure for eczema; treatments are normally based on controlling the indications by reducing inflammation and relieving the itching. There are various medications offered such as corticosteroids, hydrocortisone, oral or injectable corticosteroids. These come with various probable side effects, most usually thinning the skin, although there is ongoing study in this particular field. Normally, these steroids are to be used very carefully and a little goes a long way.

Immunomodulators are one more form of treatment though a public health advisory has been issued by the FDA because of probable risk of lymph node cancer and skin cancer. Different professional medical organizations disagree with the FDA findings.

Immunosuppressant Therapy

Some of the more severe cases of eczema are treated with immunosuppressant drugs. Sometimes these are prescribed and give slight to even dramatic improvements in the patient's eczema. Nevertheless, these can dampen the immune system and have major side effects. To be able to be on this kind of therapy, patients be carefully monitored by a doctor and go through regular blood tests.

Itch Relief

The itching factor of eczema could be counteracted using antihistamine and various anti-itch drugs. These work to reduce irritation and damage to the skin by initiating a sedative effect. Several popular sedating antihistamines include Phenergan or Benadryl. Moisturizers are likewise applied to the skin to help the healing and soothing purpose. Capsaicin applied to the skin acts as a counter irritant and hydrocortisone cream is likewise utilized, however, lots of health food stores provide some preparations along with tea tree oil and essential fatty acids as an alternative.

By applying cool water via a bath, swimming or a wet washcloth, a lot of patients have found quick relief. Another proven soothing treatment is to apply an icepack wrapped in a soft cloth or even making use of air blowing from an air conditioning vent.