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**The Complete Guide to Eczema and Psoriasis
– Prevention, Treatment and Remedies**

By Robert Ashe

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Part-I: Introduction

1. Eczema and Psoriasis – An Introduction

Eczema and Psoriasis are allergic skin conditions that display itchy, scaly and red skin. These inflammatory skin conditions can occur at any time of your life. Often, eczema and psoriasis begin in your childhood and continue throughout your growing years and adult life too. Both eczema and psoriasis have minor differences in their symptoms and characteristics.

They both result in thickening of the skin due to intense and persistent scratching. The rashes often appear as painful swellings with matter oozing from them. Sometimes, the cracks bleed and there is a burning sensation on the scales when the sufferer sweats. They manifest at nighttime and you start scratching your skin like crazy.

Causes

Eczema and psoriasis are allergic conditions that can develop into serious problems. They may result from allergies from soaps, perfumes, laundry detergents, chemicals, food allergens, certain metals as in metal jewelry, and animal dander.

Psoriasis is often the result of external allergies, while eczema is due to internal allergies - like food allergies. Common food allergens are eggs, certain fruits including strawberries, seafood, nuts, and wheat.

Excessive intake of sugary and starchy foods can cause eczema and psoriasis by weakening your immune system. Processed and refined

foods are the main cause for toxic deposits in your body that disrupt the body immune system. Your body tries to excrete the metabolites and toxic substances through the skin. These, in turn, cause itchiness and rashes on your skin.

2. Specific Characteristics of Eczema and Psoriasis

Eczema is a skin allergy that is more intense at night. This skin disorder occurs most frequently in people suffering from hay fever and asthma.

Unhealthy eating habits may cause eczema.

Sometimes, eczema eruptions increase around ten days before menstrual flow. This is due to increased progesterone levels. This eczema then decrease during the period when the progesterone level falls.

Psoriasis affects around 2% of all Americans. This skin disorder affects the skin, joints, nails, and eyes. Small areas of your skin could develop red scales (plaques) in many different shapes and sizes, and with varying degrees of intensity.

Trauma, sinusitis and bacterial infections often cause psoriasis. Additionally, your psoriasis condition will worsens in the winter months due to the cold and dry weather while the hot and humid conditions of summer are better for most sufferers.

Treatment Options

Psoriasis is often due to a deficiency of essential vitamins like magnesium and zinc.

There is no permanent cure for eczema and psoriasis. You have to change your dietary habits and stay away from various allergic substances.

Detoxification through saunas, exercises that cause you to sweat, liver and kidney cleansing, bowel cleansing and reduction of stress can bring marked improvements and much-wanted relief too.

Meditating and spending time in isolation can calm your nerves and body. This may reduce the incidence of eczema and psoriasis.

Part-II: Understanding Eczema

3. Eczema - An Overview

Eczema is a skin inflammation that causes itchy, swollen, and red skin. This condition does not have any serious or life-threatening implications but can make you feel self-conscious and uncomfortable.

Eczema, like dermatitis, is not contagious.

There are many different kinds of eczema or dermatitis, like Neuro dermatitis, Contact dermatitis, Stasis dermatitis, Seborrhoeic dermatitis, Perioral dermatitis and Atopic dermatitis.

Although all types of eczema display the most common symptoms of itching and swelling of skin, they each have their own specific signs and symptoms.

Common causes include allergies, irritants, stress and genetic factors.

Neurodermatitis occurs due to tight and gripping dresses and rubbing of clothing across your skin. This is most common about your wrists, ankles and at the back of the neck. Application of Hydrocortisone lotions and creams, wet compresses, and sedatives can provide relief.

Contact dermatitis occurs due to irritants like soaps, detergents and other cleaners. Allergens like metals, rubber, cosmetics, perfumes and certain weeds (like poison ivy) also cause eczema.

Allergens cause eczema instantly while the effects of irritants may only appear after a while.

Once you are able to identify the irritant or allergen, avoid it to be free from eczema. Creams can sometimes help you get over this eczema within a month.

Stasis dermatitis is due to fluid accumulation in tissues underneath your skin, especially on your legs.

Seborrhoeic dermatitis is a seasonal affliction due to prevailing weather.

Perioral dermatitis occurs near the nose or mouth. It is often due to moisturizers, dental products and other make-up products.

Atopic dermatitis is due to allergies and is common in people with asthma and hay fever.

Stress is a common cause for most types of eczema.

You can help to prevent some occurrences of eczema in these ways:

Warm water baths and avoiding daily bathing can retain body moisture.

Use mild soaps and avoid antibacterial soaps.

Dry your body thoroughly with a towel.

Use moisturizing cream or lotion while your skin is damp.

Try to cover itchy areas with dressings & avoid scratching.

Wear smooth clothes to avoid irritation.

Dress comfortably to avoid sweating.

What is Eczema?

Eczema is a Greek word meaning 'boiling over'. Eczema is the same as dermatitis. Your skin normally prevents loss of water from your body. However, eczema on your skin does not allow this to happen. Your skin becomes dry and cracked due to lack of sufficient moisture. This causes itchiness. The scaly skin also allows in allergens and bacteria, causing various allergic reactions and resulting in worsening of eczema.

Eczema is noninfectious inflammation of skin and the most common type is Atopic dermatitis. Different irritative factors cause pathological changes in your skin or dermis layer. These changes manifest as crusts, papules, vesicles, and acute edema. These cause itchiness, scaling, and thickening of your skin. In severe cases, skin forms plaques with patches of raised skin with watery exudates too. These look ugly and could develop infection too.

Who Develops Eczema?

Eczema affects children and infants the most with slight affliction in adults too. Although 1% to 2% of adults have eczema, it is a huge 20% in children and infants. Babies have a greater incidence on their faces while young children develop eczema on elbows, inner wrists, ankles, and knees. Some have eczema eruptions on stomach and limbs too.

Sometimes, eczema improves with age. For some others, it is a recurring and lifelong disorder. Again, eczema does not occur with the same severity. Some suffer from mild afflictions while some have severe eruptions and itchiness.

Cause

The cause for Atopic eczema is your genes. If there is a history of asthma and hay fever in your family, you could develop Atopic eczema. This is due to the presence of certain allergens in the air. Your body is unable to cope with certain scents or smells in the air. People with Atopic eczema are often allergic to perfumes and detergents.

Treatment

There is no sure cure for eczema. Regular treatment can help control your flare-ups and ease your itchiness. Treatment includes application of steroid creams, ointments, and moisturizers. Young children suffering from eczema can benefit through regular application of such remedies. They may not have eczema by the time they are in their teens.

4. Types of Eczema

Eczema is a skin disease causing drying of skin, irritation, itchiness, and cracking of skin too. Sometimes, it causes bleeding through skin eruptions.

There are four main types of Eczema in Allergic Contact Dermatitis

Atopic Eczema

Infantile Seborrhoeic Eczema

Irritant Contact Dermatitis

Allergic Contact dermatitis

Such contact eczema is due to coming in contact with specific allergens. Allergens can cause eczema if you have a specific allergy to the substance. Common allergens include poison oak, poison ivy, and poison sumac. You could develop allergies due to cleaning products, deodorants, cosmetics, construction materials, and medications too. Similarly, skin cream and lotions, fragrances, shampoos, clothing, metals, or shoes can also cause allergies.

Atopic eczema

This type of eczema occurs early in life and is common in infants between two to eighteen months. This occurs due to specific genetic allergies. Mostly, some family member has allergic asthma, hay fever, or food allergies. In babies, this eczema appears on the face, ears, neck, and body too. Elder children find eczema eruptions on their knees, elbows, ankles, hands, eyelids, and joints too.

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