



The Eczema Survival Guide

Brought to you by National Eczema Association
for Science & Education

in conjunction with
Novartis Pharmaceuticals

The Eczema Survival Guide

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The National Eczema Association for Science and Education (NEASE) works to improve the health and quality of life for all persons living with eczema by providing emotional support, information, and resources to those who have the disease and to their loved ones. As part of our ongoing mission to raise awareness about and to increase understanding of eczema, we have developed *The Eczema Survival Guide* in conjunction with Novartis Pharmaceuticals.

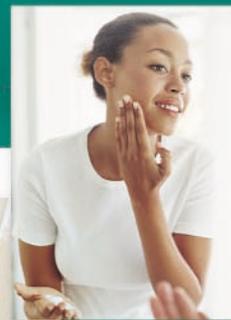
The Eczema Survival Guide, a comprehensive resource about the disease, its impact on patients' lives, and available treatment options, is based on published scientific research and on patient and physician insight. By providing eczema patients with this information, we are striving to help bridge the communication gap that exists between patients and physicians, thereby helping to improve overall disease management.

There is no cure for eczema, but, in most cases, it is manageable. We hope that you will use the information contained in this guide to broaden your knowledge of eczema and its treatment, draw inspiration from the stories of fellow eczema sufferers, enhance dialogue with your physician, and ultimately help identify the appropriate treatment strategy to fit your individual needs.

Sincerely,

Irene Crosby, NEASE Board Member, Eczema Patient

The Eczema Survival Guide



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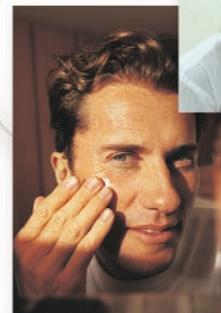
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The Eczema Survival Guide



Overview

Welcome to *The Eczema Survival Guide*. This guide is for people with **eczema**. It is divided into 4 sections. **Section 1** tells you about eczema. **Section 2** talks about how this disease affects people like you. **Section 3** tells you about different treatment options for eczema. **Section 4** is a summary, followed by a list of references and a glossary. Throughout this Guide, you will see words that are **bolded** and *italicized* (for example, **eczema**). These words are defined in the glossary at the end of the Guide.

The word *eczema* comes from a Greek word that means to effervesce or bubble or boil over. Learning more about eczema will help you to understand it. You will learn how to treat your or your child's symptoms and flares. It is important to remember that many people have eczema. Right now, as many as 35 million Americans may have it.¹ There is no need to be embarrassed by your eczema—you are not alone.

The good news is that there are ways to live better with eczema. You do not need to suffer. There are many treatments out there. By talking with your doctor about your symptoms and your experiences with different treatments, you and your doctor can work together to find the best treatment plan for you. You can live well with eczema. This Guide will help you do that.

Faces of Eczema



Faces of Eczema

Welcome to **Section 1**, Faces of Eczema. This information is for people with eczema. Here you will learn about what is thought to cause eczema. You will also learn about the symptoms of eczema and what can make it flare. The things that make it flare are called triggers.

Eczema Is Common

Many people have **atopic dermatitis** (which is often called **eczema**). Eczema is an itchy, red rash. It can appear all over the body. Many people have it on their elbows or behind their knees.² Babies often have eczema on the face, especially the cheeks and chin.³ They can also have it on the scalp, trunk (chest and back), and outer arms and legs.³ Children and adults tend to have eczema on the neck, wrists, and ankles, and in areas that bend, like the inner elbow and knee.³

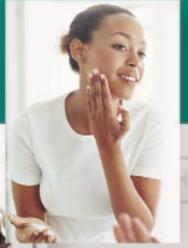
Who Gets Eczema?

More and more people have **eczema**.⁴ Right now, as many as 35 million Americans may have it.¹ That is 2 to 3 times the number of people who had it 30 years ago.⁵ For every 10 children, 1 or 2 of them have eczema. That is 10% to 20%.^{5,6} For adults, the rate is 1% to 3%, or 1 to 3 of every 100 adults.^{6,7}

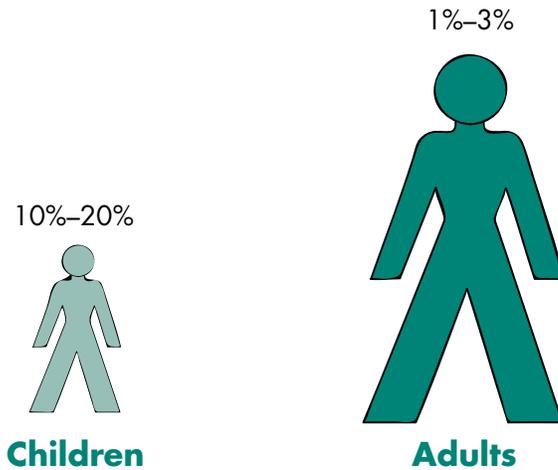
People with eczema are usually diagnosed with it when they are babies or young children.⁵ More than half (60%) of the people with eczema had their first **symptoms** before they turned 1.⁸ Most (85%) had their first symptoms by the time they turned 5.⁸ Eczema symptoms often become less severe as children grow into adults.⁷ In fact, 60% of children with eczema are symptom-free by early adolescence.² For some people, eczema continues into adulthood.⁵ Less often, it can start in adulthood.⁵

“My eczema is constant and keeps coming back; it’s frustrating that it won’t go away.”

Faces of Eczema



Many adults and children have eczema

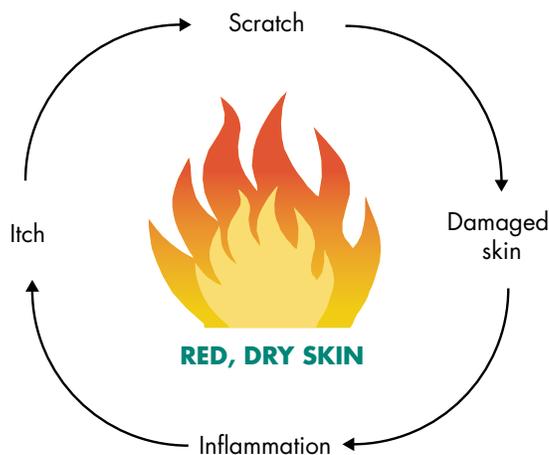


Symptoms of Eczema

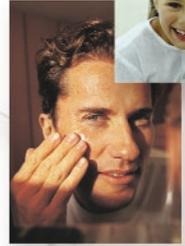
The rash of **eczema** is different for each person.⁹ It may even look different or affect different parts of your body from time to time. It can be mild, moderate, or severe. Generally, people with eczema suffer from dry, sensitive skin.^{5,7,9} Eczema is also known for its intense itch.^{9,10} The itch may be so bad that you scratch your skin until it bleeds, which can make your rash even worse, leading to even more **inflammation** and itching.¹⁰ This is called the itch-scratch cycle.¹⁰

“The itching... you can't control it. I'll go in the bathroom and let the water run on it, just to try to get some relief.”

Itch-scratch cycle



Faces of Eczema



Mild, moderate, and severe eczema

	Mild	Moderate	Severe
Erythema (redness) severity			
Papulation (bumps) severity			
Excoriation (red, open sores; injury caused by scratching) severity			
Lichenification (scaly, leathery skin; lines in skin caused by chronic rubbing and scratching) severity			

“Sometimes, I have to get up, go wash my face, walk away, and come back. A lot of time is spent away from my work area trying to relieve the itch.”

You may have times when your eczema **flares** and times when your skin is clear.⁹

Only your doctor can tell you if you have eczema.

Possible Signs and Symptoms of Eczema

- Dry, sensitive skin
- Intense itching
- Red, inflamed skin, rash
- Recurring rash (a rash that comes and goes)
 - Patches of scaly skin
 - Rough, leathery patches of skin
 - Oozing or crusting
 - Areas of swelling
 - Darkened patches of skin
 - Temporary pigment loss

Although you may be experiencing some or all of these symptoms, a diagnosis of eczema can be made only by your doctor.

Faces of Eczema



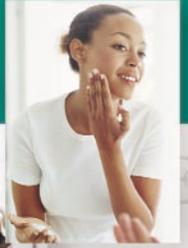
Triggers of Eczema

There are many **triggers** that can cause **eczema** to **flare** or get worse. This table lists some common eczema triggers.⁷ You should learn what triggers your eczema to flare, and then try to avoid it.

Common Eczema Triggers	
Irritants <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bathing without moisturizing• Harsh/perfumed soaps, detergents• Disinfectants• Contact with<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Irritating chemicals, fumes on the job– Wool or other rough fabrics	Allergens <ul style="list-style-type: none">• House dust mites• Pet dander (cats more than dogs)• Pollens (seasonal)• Molds• Food allergies
Infections <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bacterial• Viral<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Fungal– Cold• Stomach flu	Environment <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Extremes in temperature and/or humidity• Perspiration• Stress

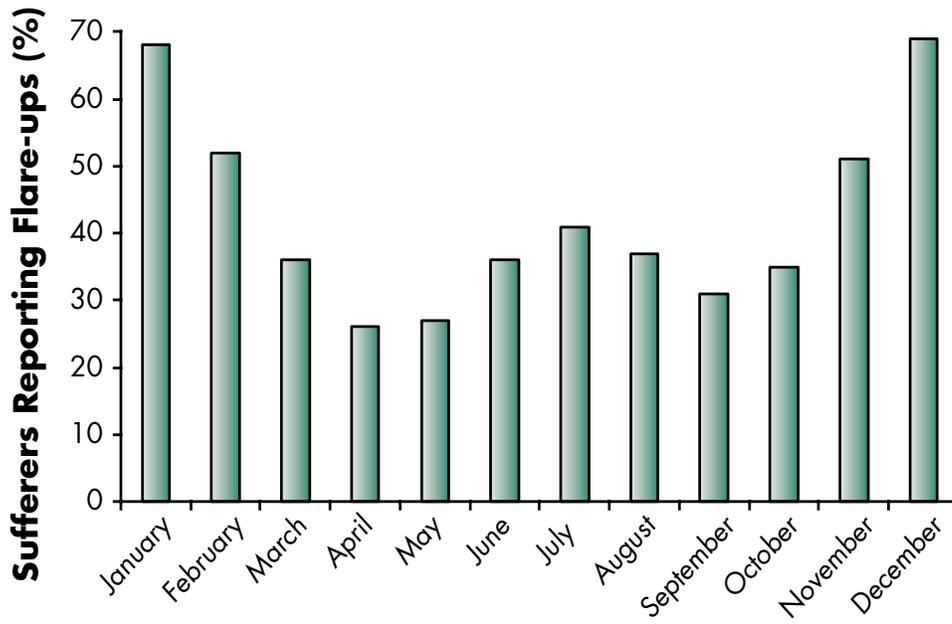
Eczema can be seasonal. Some patients with eczema suffer more when the weather is warm and humid. Others suffer more when it is dry and cold. For some people, winter is the worst season for eczema.^{9,11} The dry, cold air can make it difficult to keep skin moist. But for other people, summer is worst. The heat, humidity, and sweating also cause flares and itchiness.^{9,11}

Faces of Eczema



Eczema can be seasonal¹²

The number of flares varies from month to month.*

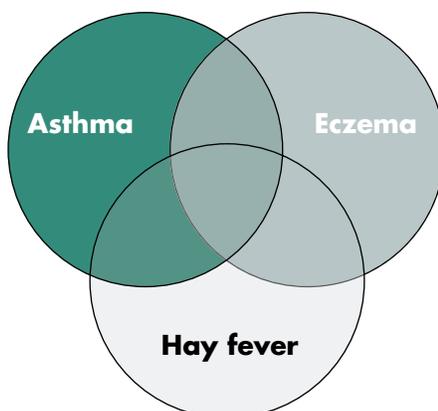


*Based on market research conducted by Novartis Pharmaceuticals.

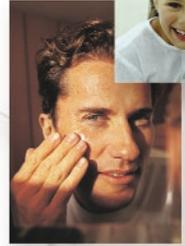
What Causes Eczema?

The exact cause of **eczema** is unknown. You might have inherited a tendency for eczema.⁵ You may have a family member who has eczema or who has hay fever (allergic rhinitis) or **asthma**. Many doctors think eczema is linked to allergic disease, such as hay fever or asthma.¹³ Doctors call this the **atopic triad**. Many children with eczema (up to 80%) will develop hay fever and/or asthma.⁴

Atopic triad



Voices of Eczema



Voices of Eczema

Welcome to **Section 2**, Voices of Eczema. Now you will hear, first hand, what other people have to say about their eczema.

Many People With Eczema Do Not Realize They Have It

Eczema is a very common skin disorder, but many people do not even realize they have it. Some people may have **symptoms** for a long time without realizing they may have eczema. If you have symptoms of eczema, it is important to see your doctor.

Eczema Is Very Annoying

Most people, including parents whose children have **eczema**, find eczema to be very annoying.^{8,14-16}

In fact, in a market research survey conducted by Novartis Pharmaceuticals during the summer of 2003 in the United States,¹⁷ 1,800 adults were interviewed by telephone. Those who said that they had eczema were asked about their **symptoms**, treatments, and lifestyles; 81% said that their eczema bothers them, with 19% saying that it bothers them a lot. They also said that they are distressed by how their eczema

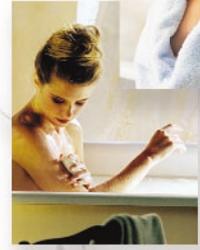
- Looks
- Itches
- Keeps coming back
- Itching keeps them awake at night
- Looks when they meet people for the first time

Also in this survey, people who said that their eczema bothered them were asked “what bothered them the most about their condition.” People chose from a list of 13 responses. The top responses are shown on the graph below.

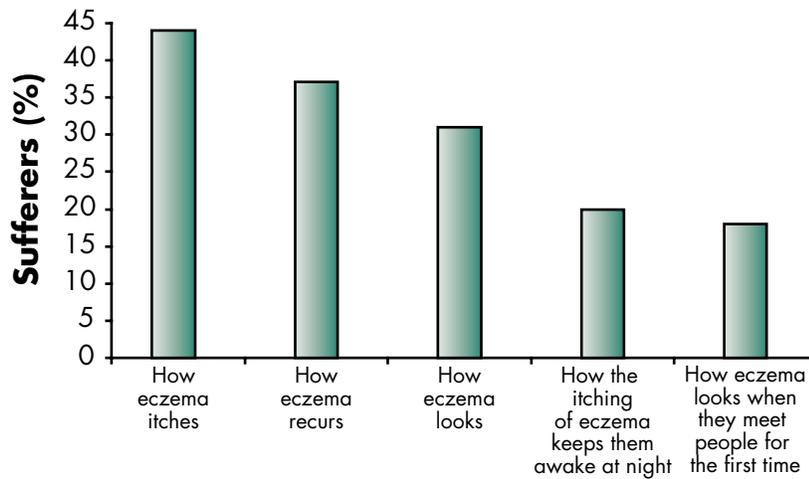
“It was a huge deal for the principal to understand why my daughter could not wear the wool blend socks required for the school uniform. I had to buy her cotton socks that didn’t aggravate her eczema.”

“My eczema is on my ears, and I rub at them all day long because they are constantly itching at me.”

Voices of Eczema



Eczema can be bothersome to sufferers in many ways^{17*}

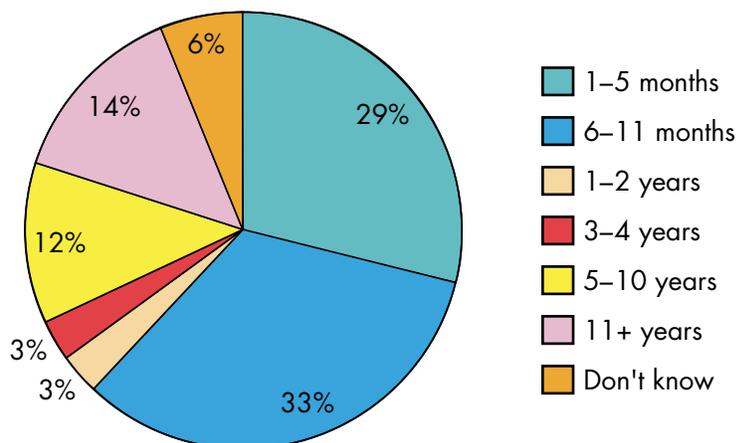


*Based on market research conducted by Novartis Pharmaceuticals.

Symptoms of Eczema Keep Returning

Eczema is a **chronic** condition.^{7,15,16,18} That means once you have it, you will probably have it for a long time, possibly for your whole life. Eczema is also episodic.¹⁶ That means your **symptoms** may come and go. Unfortunately, most people have frequent eczema **flares**. During these times, their symptoms may get much worse.

People with eczema report having it for many years^{17*}



*Based on market research conducted by Novartis Pharmaceuticals.

"I'll wake up in the middle of the night with an eczema flare, and I'll try to find the coolest spot on my bed."

Voices of Eczema



Eczema Symptoms Frequently Get in the Way of Daily Life

Eczema symptoms frequently get in the way of life.¹⁴⁻¹⁶ People with eczema often have trouble sleeping because of the itch.^{10,19}

In one market research survey,¹⁷ people said their eczema affects many daily activities. They may have to change the way they do chores. Many report cutting down on certain activities or avoiding them altogether because of their **symptoms**. This includes activities such as exercising, playing sports, jogging, running, and other activities that cause them to sweat. It also includes swimming because of irritants in the water. Some said getting ready to travel or go on vacation is a big problem because their eczema affects the types of clothes they can take with them. They said that their eczema affects their choice of clothes.

Effects on Daily Life: Patient Quotes

“When I get an eczema flare, I get very miserable.”

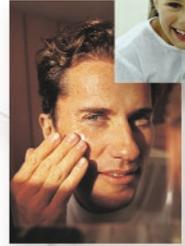
“I had signed up for an advanced swimming class, and I had to stop taking it because the chlorine in the water was messing with me from head to toe.”

“I had a wedding to go to with my husband and I was praying the whole week that my eczema would not flare up.”

“It would be summertime and I’d have to wear turtlenecks and long-sleeved shirts...”

“My eczema comes out on my hands, and they swell up to the point where I can’t bend my fingers... and it’s hard for me because I do a lot of computer work.”

Options for Treatment



Options for Treatment

Welcome to **Section 3**, Options for Treatment. Here you will learn about the many treatments that are available. Although eczema cannot be cured, it can be treated.

What Do People Use to Treat Their Eczema?

People try many things to relieve the itch of **eczema**. They use **over-the-counter** remedies they can get in a drugstore. They use prescription medications they get from their doctors. They even try other (alternative) treatments, such as herbs.²⁰ Still, one study found that many people are not satisfied with the effectiveness of their medications.¹⁸ They often say their medications¹⁸

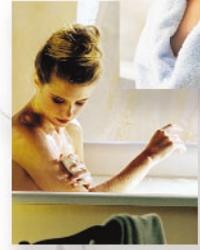
- Do not work
- Are messy to use
- Are too expensive
- Cause side effects

First Steps in Treating Eczema

If you have **eczema**, it is important to take good care of your skin.^{3,21} Taking warm (not hot!) baths on a regular basis and immediately applying **moisturizers** afterward will help keep your skin moist.^{7,21} You should look for a moisturizing **cream** (which has a little water in it) or **ointment** (which has no water in it) instead of a **lotion** (which has more water than oil in it) because lotions may actually dry out your skin.⁷

“Even when I don’t have a flare I’m always thinking about when a flare is going to come and what I can do to prevent it.”

Options for Treatment



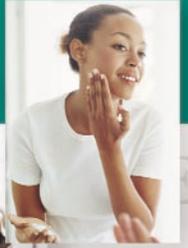
Moisturizers^{7,21} and other **over-the-counter** drugstore preparations, such as low-strength **steroid** creams, may help your eczema. Many people use over-the-counter creams. In one market research survey conducted by Novartis Pharmaceuticals, 84% of the people said they used a moisturizer (either alone or with an over-the-counter steroid).¹² However, another study found that many people, including doctors, do not think that over-the-counter products work very well by themselves in controlling eczema.¹⁸

It is important to talk with your doctor about the best way you can treat **your** eczema (including how to avoid **triggers**).²²

Eczema Prevention Checklist

- ✔ Moisturize every day.
- ✔ Wear cotton or other soft fabrics. Avoid rough, scratchy fibers and tight clothing.
- ✔ Take lukewarm baths and showers, using mild soap or non-soap cleanser.
 - Gently pat your skin dry with a soft towel—do not rub.
 - Apply a moisturizer within 3 minutes after bathing to “lock in” moisture.
- ✔ When possible, avoid extremes of temperature/humidity and activities that make you sweat.
- ✔ Learn your eczema triggers and avoid them.
- ✔ Keep your fingernails short to help keep scratching from breaking the skin.
- ✔ Some people with allergies find it helps to remove carpets and pets from their houses.

Options for Treatment



Using Prescription Creams and Ointments

People with **eczema** often need prescription medications to control their **symptoms**.

A market research survey of 18,052 people conducted by Novartis Pharmaceuticals showed that use of prescription medications increased with disease severity¹²

- 75% of people with severe eczema use prescription drugs as their primary medication to treat their condition
- 41% of people with mild eczema use prescription drugs as their primary medication to treat their condition

If you are using prescription drugs to treat your eczema, it is important to talk with your doctor about how to use them properly and what you should expect from them. Your doctor might not realize that your medication is not working as well as you would like or that certain side effects really bother you.

In one survey of patients and doctors, almost all the doctors (91%) said prescription **creams** and **ointments** work, but more than half the patients (64%) said they don't work.¹⁸ When you see your doctor, let him or her know whether you are having any side effects and how well the treatment is working for you.

It is important for you to talk with your doctor about your symptoms, experiences with different medications, and any concerns that you may have about either. Your doctor should tell you about the medication you are using and how you should use it to best treat your eczema.²² Sometimes patients do not use their medications exactly as they should, which can lead to unsatisfactory symptom control.^{23,24}

Options for Treatment



Many prescription drugs are used to treat eczema.

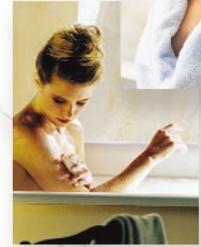
Examples of Topical Prescription Medications*

Drug Type	Trade Name (active ingredient)**
Topical steroids	Aclovate® (aclometasone), Aristocort® (triamcinolone), Cormax® (clobetasol), Cutivate® (fluticasone), Cyclocort® (amcinonide), Decadron® (dexamethasone), Dermatop® (prednicarbate), DesOwen® (desonide), Diprolene® (betamethasone), Diprosone® (betamethasone), Elocon® (mometasone), Halog® (halcinonide), Hytone® (hydrocortisone), Kenalog® (triamcinolone), Lidex® (fluocinonide), Locoid® (hydrocortisone butyrate), Psorcon® (diflorasone), Synalar® (fluocinolone), Temovate® (clobetasol), Topicort® (desoximetasone), Tridesilon® (desonide), Ultravate® (halobetasol), Valisone® (betamethasone), Westcort® (hydrocortisone valerate)
Topical immunomodulators	Elidel® (pimecrolimus), Protopic® (tacrolimus)

*This list does not include all topical steroids. Talk with your doctor or pharmacist about the treatment you may be using.

**Aclovate®, Aristocort®, Cormax®, Cutivate®, Cyclocort®, Decadron®, Dermatop®, DesOwen®, Diprolene®, Diprosone®, Elocon®, Halog®, Hytone®, Kenalog®, Lidex®, Locoid®, Psorcon®, Synalar®, Temovate®, Topicort®, Tridesilon®, Ultravate®, Valisone®, Westcort®, and Protopic® are not registered trademarks of Novartis Pharmaceuticals.

Options for Treatment



Using Topical Prescription Steroids

Topical steroids are commonly prescribed to treat **eczema**.¹³ Steroids come in many strengths—low, mid, high, and ultra-high.

Strength	Classification	Examples	Brand Names*
Low	VII	Hydrocortisone 1%–2.5%	Hytone®
	VI	Desonide 0.05%	DesOwen®, Tridesilon®
Mid	V	Betamethasone valerate 0.1% Fluocinolone acetonide 0.025%	Valisone® Synalar®
	IV	Triamcinolone acetonide 0.1% Mometasone furoate 0.1%	Kenalog® Elocon® (cream)
High	III	Betamethasone dipropionate 0.05% Mometasone furoate 0.1%	Diprosone® (cream) Elocon® (ointment)
	II	Halobetasol propionate 0.05% Fluocinonide 0.05% Betamethasone dipropionate 0.05%	Ultravate® (cream) Lidex® Diprosone® (ointment)
Ultra-high	I	Clobetasol propionate 0.05% Halobetasol propionate 0.05%	Temovate® Ultravate® (ointment)

*DesOwen®, Diprosone®, Elocon®, Hytone®, Kenalog®, Lidex®, Synalar®, Temovate®, Tridesilon®, Ultravate®, and Valisone® are not registered trademarks of Novartis Pharmaceuticals.

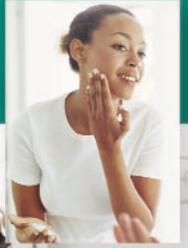
Note: This list does not include all topical steroids. Talk with your doctor or pharmacist about the treatment you may be using.

Your doctor will decide which steroid, and what strength, is best for you based on²⁴

- Age
- Breakout areas of the body
- **Symptom** severity

If you are confused about how to use your steroid, talk to your doctor so that he or she can explain how to use it appropriately.^{13,22,25} Your doctor may not want you to apply your steroid every day for a long time because in certain circumstances, this can result in side effects, such as **striae** (stretch marks) and **atrophy** (thinning of the skin).^{13,25}

Options for Treatment



Topical, Prescription, Steroid-Free Options for Eczema

There are 2 **topical** prescription **eczema** drugs that do not contain **steroids**. These are called **topical immunomodulators** or TIMs. Both are effective in treating the itch and rash of **eczema**. Neither causes certain side effects, such as thinning of the skin (**atrophy**), stretch marks (**striae**), spider veins, or discoloration of the skin.

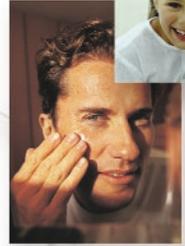
Elidel

One of them is **Elidel**® (pimecrolimus). Elidel is a **steroid-free cream** for patients 2 years of age and older who have **mild-to-moderate** eczema. If you have mild-to-moderate eczema and you and your doctor feel that other treatments don't work for you, there's concern about their risks, or you simply can't tolerate them, then your doctor may prescribe steroid-free Elidel.

Elidel can be used for repeated treatment courses as recommended by your doctor. Treating with Elidel at the first signs of eczema **symptoms** may help control the disease. Elidel can also be used on sensitive skin areas such as the face and neck.²⁶

The most common side effects associated with Elidel are warmth or burning where applied; headache; cold-like symptoms such as sore throat, cough, and runny nose; flu-like symptoms such as fever; and, rarely, viral skin infection.²⁶ When using Elidel, you should protect your skin from sun and sun lamps.²⁶ Skin treated with Elidel should not be covered with bandages, dressings, or wraps.

Options for Treatment

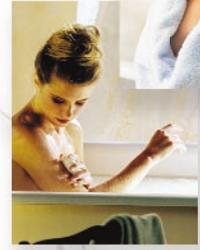


Elidel—For Mild-to-Moderate Eczema

Elidel

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Who can use it | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Elidel cream is for people with mild-to-moderate eczema who are 2 years of age and older whose doctors have decided that it is right for them |
| How to use it | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Elidel can be used for repeated courses as directed by your doctor |
| Features | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Elidel can significantly relieve the itching and redness of mild-to-moderate eczema• Elidel contains no steroids• Elidel can be used for repeated courses as directed by your doctor• Elidel is an odor-free, nongreasy cream that is absorbed quickly and should not stain clothes• Elidel can be used anywhere on the skin—including the face, neck, and around the eyes |

Options for Treatment



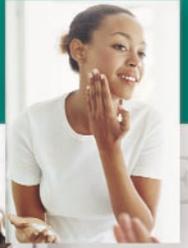
Protopic®

The other topical, steroid-free medication is **Protopic®** (tacrolimus). Protopic is a steroid-free **ointment** for patients 2 years of age and older who have **moderate-to-severe** eczema. Protopic comes in 2 strengths—0.03% and 0.1%. Adults can use either strength, but only the 0.03% strength should be used for children 2 to 15 years old.²⁷ If you have moderate-to-severe eczema and you and your doctor feel that other treatments don't work for you, there's concern about their risks, or you simply can't tolerate them, then your doctor may prescribe steroid-free Protopic.

Protopic can be used for repeated treatment courses as recommended by your doctor. Protopic can effectively treat moderate-to-severe eczema. Protopic is safe to use on sensitive skin areas, such as the face and neck.²⁸

The most common side effect is stinging and burning. The worse your eczema is, the more likely you are to have stinging and burning. Protopic may be associated with an increased risk for certain skin infections.²⁷ When using Protopic, avoid direct sunlight, tanning salons, and **phototherapy**,^{27,28} and don't cover the skin being treated with bandages, dressings, or wraps.

Options for Treatment



Protopic—For Moderate-to-Severe Eczema

Protopic

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Who can use it | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Protopic ointment (0.1%) is for adults with moderate-to-severe eczema whose doctors have decided that it is right for them• Protopic ointment (0.03%) is for adults and children 2 years of age and older with moderate-to-severe eczema whose doctors have decided that it is right for them |
| How to use it | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Protopic can be used for repeated courses as directed by your doctor |
| Features | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Protopic can effectively treat moderate-to-severe eczema• Protopic can be used for repeated courses as directed by your doctor• Protopic contains no steroids• Protopic is an ointment• Protopic can be used anywhere on the skin—including the face, neck, and around the eyes |

Options for Treatment

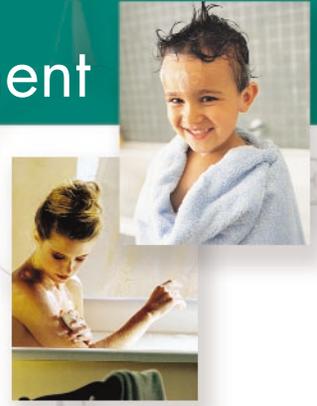


Nontraditional Treatments to Treat Eczema

Many people have tried some type of alternative medication to treat their **eczema**. These treatments may provide some relief, but their safety and efficacy have not been well tested, and they have not been evaluated by the US Food and Drug Administration.²⁰ It is important for you to tell your doctor if you are taking any of these nontraditional remedies. And it is especially important for your doctor to know if you are taking any of these nontraditional remedies while you are taking any kind of medicine. People sometimes try these remedies if they are frustrated with their other treatments.²⁰ Here is a list of things people frequently try

- Herbal remedies
 - Licorice (used as a **topical** gel)
 - Guava leaves (used as a tea)
 - Chinese herbal teas
 - St. John's wort (used as a **lotion** or a tea)
- **Probiotics** (taken by mouth, they help "good" bacteria to grow in the intestines, which is thought to help relieve **inflammation**)
- **Homeopathic remedies** (based on the idea of treating diseases with substances that cause similar **symptoms**). Examples include arsenicum album (arsenic oxide) and calcarea carbonica (ground oyster shell)
- Hypnosis
- Acupuncture
- **Gamma linoleic acid** oils
 - **Evening primrose oil**
 - **Borage oil**

Options for Treatment



Treating Refractory or Severe Eczema

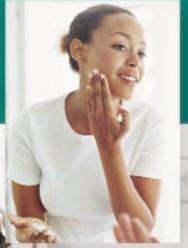
If you have **refractory** or severe **eczema** that has not improved, your doctor may prescribe less common therapies such as

- **Phototherapy (ultraviolet therapy)**
- **Systemic (oral) steroids**
- **Coal tar**
- **Oral immunosuppressants**

Considering All This Information, What's the Best Treatment Plan for Me or for My Child?

You will probably still do many of the same things you always do. You need to learn about your **eczema** so you can take care of your skin. Most important, you need to **moisturize** immediately (within 3 minutes) after bathing. You and your child need to recognize **triggers** that cause your or your child's eczema to **flare** and learn how to avoid them. You should talk with your doctor or with your child's pediatrician about medications that will help you manage your or your child's eczema. Your doctor may recommend a treatment plan that includes a prescription medication to reduce and control the number of flares that you or your child experience.

Each treatment has its place. For example, there are times when your doctor may prescribe a **steroid** to treat your flares, and there other times when your doctor may decide that a **steroid-free** product is more appropriate. Together, you will decide what steps are needed to manage your or your child's eczema long term. Work with your doctor to make a treatment plan that works best for you and your family.



Summary

Hopefully, this report has given you a lot of information about **eczema** that will help you better treat and manage your condition. It is important to remember that

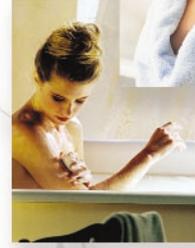
- Many people have eczema
- You shouldn't be embarrassed by your eczema
- You are not alone in your frustration with your eczema
- There are many treatments for eczema
- There is no reason for you to continue to suffer because of your eczema
- You should talk with your doctor about your **symptoms**, experiences with different medications, and feelings about your eczema
- You and your doctor can work together to find the best treatment plan for you and your family
- By talking and working with your doctor, you can better treat and manage your eczema
- Instead of eczema controlling your life, you and your doctor can control your eczema



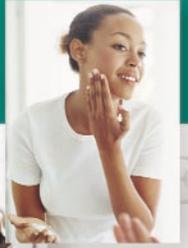
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Glossary

allergens

Foreign substances that cause allergic reactions. Examples of allergens are plant pollens, dust mites, animal dander, foods, insect venom, antibiotics, and substances such as latex and rubber.

antihistamine

Medicine used to counteract histamine, a chemical released by the body in an allergic reaction that contributes to inflammation. Some examples are diphenhydramine (Benadryl[®]) and hydroxyzine (Atarax[®]). Many may cause drowsiness.

asthma

Airway disease characterized by recurrent breathing problems. People with asthma have acute episodes when the air passages in their lungs suddenly narrow and breathing becomes more difficult. Sometimes, asthma attacks are triggered by allergens, but infection, exercise, cold air, and other factors are also important triggers.

atopic dermatitis

Also called eczema, this is a chronic, recurring inflammatory skin disorder that usually first appears in babies or very young children and may last through adulthood. Eczema causes the skin to itch and to develop a red, scaly, patchy rash. It often develops in people who have hay fever or asthma or who have family members with these conditions.

atopic triad

Atopic dermatitis (commonly called eczema) forms part of what is known as the atopic triad, which also includes hay fever (allergic rhinitis) and asthma. It is a medical term doctors use to refer to these 3 allergic disorders: asthma, hay fever or allergic rhinitis, and atopic dermatitis.

atrophy (skin)

Thinning of the skin.

borage oil

Comes from the seeds of the borage (*Borago officinalis*) plant.

chronic

Long-lasting and occurring over and over again or characterized by long suffering; referring to a disease or a disorder that lasts for a long time.

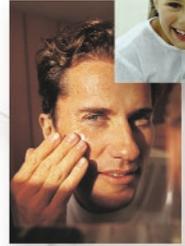
coal tar

A byproduct obtained from bituminous coal.

cream

A semisolid mixture of oil and water that is mostly oil and is intended for topical use.

Glossary



eczema

A type of skin condition with redness, itch, bumpiness, and scaling (see atopic dermatitis).

emollient

Something that will make skin softer and more pliant by increasing its hydration. Also called moisturizer.

evening primrose oil

Comes from the seeds of the evening primrose plant.

flare

A term used to describe when eczema worsens (itching and redness).

gamma linoleic acid

An essential fatty acid in the omega-6 family that is found primarily in plant-based oils.

homeopathic remedies

Treatment based on homeopathic principles. Homeopathy views symptoms as the body's natural reaction in fighting the illness and, unlike conventional medicine, seeks to stimulate rather than suppress them.

immunomodulator

Any substance that influences the immune system; a substance or process capable of modifying functions of the immune system.

inflammation

The body's natural response to "injury" or abnormal stimulation by a physical, biologic, or chemical agent. Typical signs of inflammation include pain, itchiness, warmth, redness, and loss of function.

lotion

A semisolid mixture of oil and water that is mostly water and is intended for topical use.

moisturizer

Something that will make skin softer and more pliant by increasing its hydration. Also called emollient.

ointment

A clear, greasy semisolid (contains no water) preparation that is intended for topical use.

oral

Taken by mouth (for example, a pill).

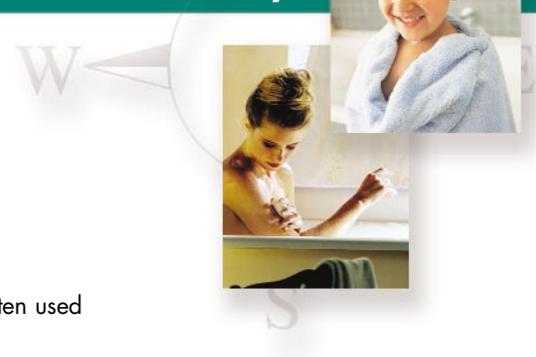
oral immunosuppressant

An oral medication that prevents or suppresses a response by the immune system.

over-the-counter

A drug that can be purchased without a prescription.

Glossary



phototherapy (ultraviolet therapy)

Therapeutic use of ultraviolet light.

placebo

Something that looks like a drug and is used like a drug but that has no active ingredient; often used to test the efficacy and safety of prescription medications in clinical trials.

probiotics

Substances that promote the growth of "good" bacteria in the intestines; probiotics may reduce allergic reactions by improving digestion or by influencing the immune system, or both.

refractory

Not responsive to usual treatments.

steroid

Glucocorticoid steroids are used as anti-inflammatory treatment for eczema. These steroids can be topical or oral. They are different from the anabolic steroids used by some athletes.

steroid-free

Does not contain a steroid.

striae

Stretch marks.

symptom

Anything that a patient experiences that may indicate a disease.

systemic

Involving the whole body.

T cells

Also known as T lymphocytes, T cells are a type of white blood cell involved in rejecting foreign tissue, regulating immunity, and controlling the production of antibodies to fight infection.

topical

Pertaining to the surface of the skin; a medication applied to the skin.

triggers

Things that cause eczema to flare, such as irritants, microbes, extremes in temperature, humidity, stress, and allergens.



Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation, East Hanover, New Jersey 07936

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