

Allergy Consultants, P.A.

Specialists in Pediatric and Adult Allergy, Asthma, and Sinus Disease

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ATOPIC DERMATITIS (ECZEMA)

Atopic Dermatitis, also known as eczema, is a chronic condition of the skin. The severity of the dermatitis can vary from mild to severe and may even clear at times. Many patients experience flares in their eczema after exposure to allergens such as pollen, animal dander, dust mites and foods to which they are allergic. Management should be approached in a step-wise fashion depending on the severity of dermatitis. Our goal is to avoid the use of oral/systemic steroids for this chronic illness. The ointment form of topical medications are often more effective than creams or lotions. Cream, rather than ointment, may be appropriate during humid weather.

1. Mild Atopic Dermatitis or Maintenance Care:

- A. Bathes once or twice each day using warm, but not hot, water for at least 15 to 20 minutes.
- B. Soaps should be avoided except in areas which they are needed. A mild soap, such as unscented Dove or Oil of Olay Sensitive Skin formula should be used as needed.
- C. Gently pat away water and immediately apply a moisturizer or skin medication such as a topical steroid, right to damp skin. Applying topicals in this manner will seal the water in and make the skin less dry and itchy. Moisturizers or sealers, such as Vanicream or Vaseline, should not be applied on top of topical steroids.
- D. Hydrocortisone 1% or 2.5% ointment should be applied to areas of mild eczema anywhere on the body after baths. They may be applied one additional time during the day, and are safe for use on the face.
- E. Moisturizers, such as Aquaphor ointment, CeraVe, or Vanicream should be applied generously to clear areas and immediately after the bath. They may be applied anywhere on the body and should be used at least twice daily.
- F. T/Sal or other medicated shampoos should be used minimally twice a week to control flaking in the hair. This may need to be used daily.

2. Moderate Atopic Dermatitis

- A. Bathe twice daily for 20 minutes, each in warm water, morning and evening.
- B. Elidel, Protopic and Hydrocortisone 2.5% ointment to less severely affected areas on the face, groin, and underarms after bath.
- C. Triamcinolone 0.1% or Elocon (Mometasone) to the severely affected areas on the body and Elidel, Protopic or DesOwen ointment 0.05% to the less severely affected areas on the body after bath.
- D. Protopic or Elidel can be applied 1-2 times per week in areas that frequently flare once symptoms are under control.
- E. Aquaphor or Vaseline Ointment should be applied after bath.
- F. Wet socks covered by dry socks during sleeping hours over hands and feet when involved.
- G. Consider Bactroban ointment to super-infected lesions two times daily.

3. Severe Atopic Dermatitis

- A. Baths three times daily for 20 minutes each in warm water, not hot water, occurring morning, mid-day, and at bedtime. Wet face cloth (with eyes/mouth cut out) for rash involving face.
- B. Elidel, Protopic, Desowen 0.05% or hydrocortisone 2.5% ointment applied to affected areas on the face, underarms and groin after the morning and bedtime bath.
- C. Triamcinolone 0.1% or 0.5% ointment or Elocon (Mometasone) to other areas of skin with eczema involvement after the morning and bedtime bath.
- D. Protopic or Elidel can be applied 1-2 times per week in areas that frequently flare once symptoms are under control.
- E. Vaseline or Aquaphor should be applied after baths to entire body.
- F. Wet pajamas or wet underwear followed by dry pajamas after each bath for a minimum of two to three hours.
- G. Wet socks followed by dry socks to hands and feet after each bath leaving on for a minimum of two to three hours.

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