



Kapa'a Pediatrics, LLC

Eczema (Atopic Dermatitis)

What is it? Eczema is a bright red, scaly, dry and itchy rash. In infants, eczema is most commonly located on the cheeks, creases of arms, legs, and ankles. In older children, eczema can occur anywhere on the body. There are many causes of eczema such as food, environmental allergies and genetics.

What to expect: Eczema typically shows up between 2 to 6 months of age. It clears by 18 months in about half the cases, and usually becomes less severe by age 3 years. Unfortunately, some individuals will always struggle with eczema.

Treatment options: Most mild to moderate eczema can be managed with the following tips.

1. **MOISTURIZER** is the key. Spread plenty of hypoallergenic, fragrance free and dye free, skin moisturizer to eczema areas whenever the skin feels dry. This could be 15 times per day. Examples of moisturizer are Cera Ve, Vanicream, Aquaphor, Cetaphil, and Aveeno. Thicker lubricants such as vaseline can make eczema worse.
2. **Bathing and Moisturizer:** it is critical to moisturize after bathing. A tub soak with warm (NOT HOT) water and NO soap for 15 minutes can help to hydrate the skin. Lightly pat the skin dry and immediately apply moisturizer.
3. **Steroids:** the goal is to do your best with moisturizer and diet to minimize topical steroid use. If these are needed there are many types, but most commonly Hydrocortisone 1% over the counter should be used first and then if there is no improvement a stronger steroid such as triamcinolone (prescription) can be used. Topical steroids should be used only when the skin is red, inflamed and itchy. Use it 12 times per day for 37 days.
4. **Diet Controls:** Consider eliminating the most common foods that cause eczema flare ups. I recommend a 3 week complete elimination diet of the following foods, one at a time, in the order listed. Dairy, eggs, wheat, soy, nuts and shellfish.
5. Clip nails to minimize the damage caused by scratching.
6. Wear cotton clothing as sweating can make eczema worse.
7. *** Dr. Lam recommends every parent of a child who has eczema go to the National Jewish Health website (<https://www.nationaljewish.org>) and view the Eczema section.***

When to call your doctor:

- Sudden change or worsening of rash
- Rash is not responding to the above home care
- Eczema appears to be infected with weeping, tenderness and redness

*** Patient handouts created by Kapa'a Pediatrics are intended to give parents the most common and pertinent facts about a certain issue. If there is ever any concern that your child was given an incorrect diagnosis or is not following the usual expected course for an illness please call us to speak with a physician. (808) 634-8011***