

Dermatologist Prince George

Dermatologist Prince George - Dermatitis or inflammation of the outer layer of the skin known as the epidermis is referred to as eczema. The word literally means "to boil over", in the Greek language. Practically 1 in 9 people in the United Kingdom have been diagnosed with eczema at some point in their lives. In some languages, the terms 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 refers to an acute one.

The term "eczema" covers different persistent skin conditions. These consist of recurring skin rashes and dryness which have connected signs of dryness, itching, crusting, flaking, oozing, bleeding, blistering and skin oedema or swelling. Every so often, temporary skin discoloration can result. Furthermore, scratching open a lesion that is in the healing process may enlarge the rash and could lead to possible scarring.

Classification

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

These classifications are ordered by the frequency of incidence.

Common

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

The categories that contact dermatitis falls into is allergic and irritant. Irritant dermatitis can be caused to specific irritants including detergents such as sodium lauryl sulphate. Allergic dermatitis could occur as a result of a delayed reaction to particular allergen like nickel or poison ivy. Wet cement is an example of a substance which acts as both an allergen and an irritant. Phototoxic dermatitis can happen together with different substances after exposure to sunlight. About three quarters of contact eczema cases are the irritant type. 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 kind of eczema that becomes worse during dry winter weather and normally affects the trunk and the limbs. It is referred to as xerotic eczema or craquele eczema, asteatotic eczema, winter itch, craquelatum eczema or pruritus hiemalis. The itchy, tender skin resembles a cracked and dry river bed. This condition is really popular amongst older people. A connected disorder is Ichthyosis.

Cradle cap in babies is officially called Seborrheic or Seborrheic dermatitis. This is a condition that is usually classified as a form of eczema which is related closely to dandruff. It causes a greasy or dry flaking of the scalp and can also have an effect on the face, eyebrows and at times the trunk. This is considered a harmless condition except in severe conditions of cradle cap. In newborns, it presents as a thick, yellow, crusty scalp rash which is called cradle cap. This condition has been related to a lack of biotin and is generally curable.

Less Common Types of Eczema

Dyshidrosis is another kind of eczema that also goes under the names of pompholyx eczema, dyshidrotic eczema, housewife's eczema or vesicular palmoplantar dermatitis. This particular condition normally shows up on the soles, palms and sides of fingers and toes. It presents with small opaque bumps called vesicles, thickening skin and cracks are accompanied by itching that becomes worse at night. This is a common kind of hand eczema and it gets worse during warm weather.

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

Cause

Some attribute eczema to the hygiene hypothesis. This theory postulates that the cause of asthma, eczema and other allergic diseases is because of an overly clean environment. This theory is supported by epidemiologic studies 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 possibility for asthma and allergy.

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

Diagnosis

Normally the diagnosis of eczema consists mostly on physical examination and history. Then again, various cases can 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 treatment for eczema; treatments are usually based on controlling the indications by reducing inflammation and relieving the itching. There are several medications available like corticosteroids, hydrocortisone, injectable or oral corticosteroids. These come with several potential side effects, most commonly thinning the skin, though there is ongoing research in this field. Typically, these steroids are to be utilized really carefully and a little goes a long way.

Immunomodulators are another form of cure though a public health advisory has been issued by the FDA because of possible chance of skin cancer and lymph node cancer. Various expert medical groups don't agree with the FDA findings.

Immunosuppressant Therapy

Among the more severe cases of eczema are treated with immunosuppressant drugs. At times these are prescribed and give slight to even dramatic improvements in the patient's eczema. However, these can dampen the immune system and have major side effects. To be able to be on this type of therapy, patients be carefully monitored by a physician and undergo regular blood tests.

Itch Relief

Making use of antihistamine and various anti-itch drugs can help in the treatment of the itching component of eczema. By initiating a sedative effect, these work to reduce damage and irritation to the skin. Various popular sedating antihistamines include Phenergan or Benadryl. Moisturizers are also applied to the skin to be able to help the soothing and healing purpose. Capsaicin applied to the skin acts as a counter irritant and hydrocortisone cream is also utilized, however, numerous health food stores offer some preparations with tea tree oil and essential fatty acids as an option.

Many patients have found fast acting relief by applying cool water via swimming, a wet washcloth or a bath. Making use of an icepack wrapped in a soft cloth or even utilizing air blowing from an air conditioning vent has proven soothing.