



# ASPIRE<sup>®</sup>

## DERMATOLOGY

Newsletter: October 2020

## National Eczema Awareness Month

In honor of October being National Eczema Awareness month, this issue of our monthly newsletter will highlight some of the various types of eczema and provide some tips on how to manage this common condition. Eczema is the name for a group of non-contagious conditions characterized by dry, itchy, inflamed and irritated skin. 31 million (10%) of people in the United States have some form of eczema. 1 in 10 individuals will develop eczema during their lifetime, with prevalence peaking in early childhood. Eczema triggers may include dry skin, irritants such as fragrances, soaps and metals to name a few, and emotional stress. It is important to remember that eczema can affect people differently and one individual's triggers may not be the same for you. Most cases can be managed with appropriate treatments and lifestyle changes. Learning more about what kind of eczema you have and what may have triggered it is an important first step in managing this condition.



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## Atopic Dermatitis (AD) ➤

Atopic Dermatitis is a type of eczema that often appears during childhood, usually during the first year of life. About 90% of people develop AD before age 5. The condition is characterized by dry, scaly and itchy skin. Over time, the skin can become thickened to protect itself from constant scratching and it can lighten or darken as a response to the chronic inflammation. In infants, this condition appears on the scalp, forehead and/or cheeks. In children, the rash often presents in the creases of the elbows, knees, neck, wrists, ankles, and/or crease between the buttocks and legs. In adults, the rash can cover most of the body.

A family history of Atopic Dermatitis, asthma, or hay fever is the strongest risk factor for developing AD meaning that genes do play a role in causing this condition. Foods do not cause AD, but allergies to foods can exacerbate the condition. Treatment of AD often includes medicine, skin care, and lifestyle changes. Many patients receive tips for coping as this condition can be emotionally distressing.



## ◀ Contact Dermatitis

Contact dermatitis is caused by exposure to substances in the environment. These substances either cause an irritant skin reaction or an allergic skin reaction. Repeated exposure to water, soaps, detergents, dyes or chemicals can compromise the skin barrier and lead to irritant contact dermatitis. Common examples of irritant dermatitis are diaper rashes or dry cracked hands due to repeated water exposure. One or many exposures to allergens such as poison ivy, nickel (see photo), cosmetics, medicines, foods, latex and fragrances, etc., can cause allergic contact dermatitis. Symptoms may include dryness, burning, itching, scale, redness, blisters, and swelling. Treatment is aimed at eliminating the offending agent and then treating the eczematous inflammation with medicines.

## Nummular Dermatitis ➤

Nummular dermatitis is characterized by coin-shaped, red, scaly plaques. This rash can be itchy, burning, or asymptomatic. The cause is unknown but studies show that it may be associated with dry skin, atopic dermatitis, poor blood flow, injury to the skin, or taking certain medications. This condition tends to be worse in the winter months but can occur year round. Frequently involved areas are the backs of the hands, forearms, lower legs, flanks, and hips. Treatment is aimed at decreasing inflammation with medicines and preventing flare-ups with lifestyle changes.





**128 million**

in wages was lost in 2016 by patients and caregivers due to eczema



**66% of people**

say eczema impacts their jobs and household chores



**86% of people**

report they were not satisfied with their eczema treatment



**33% of children**

of children have sleep disruption 5 or more nights a week from eczema



**1 in 5 children**

face bullying because of their eczema



**33% of people**

have been diagnosed with anxiety or depression



**31.6 million**

Americans have some form of eczema



**4.3 billion**

is the cost of eczema's annual burden

## Tips on How to Manage Eczema

When your skin is dry or eczematous, it is important to avoid water exposure as much as possible so that you are not washing away your natural oils. We recommend showering less than 5 minutes, no more than once daily, and using cooler water. Use a fragrance free soap such as Dove Sensitive Skin bar soap (unscented) only where needed and immediately lock in moisture with a heavy moisturizing cream following your shower. If dry or eczematous skin is localized, apply a heavy petrolatum-based lubricant such as Vaseline or Aquaphor to the area before bathing to form a barrier. Avoid dyes and fragrances in your skincare products and laundry detergents as these can lead to skin allergies and irritation.

If you have dry and itchy skin or believe you may have eczema, we are here to help you.

Call to schedule an appointment today!

MIDDLETOWN OFFICE	102 Valley Road, Middletown, RI 02842
CUMBERLAND OFFICE	2138 Mendon Road, Suite 201, Cumberland, RI 02864
WARREN OFFICE	851 Main Street, Warren, RI 02885
WARWICK OFFICE	618 Toll Gate Road, Warwick, RI 02886
TIVERTON OFFICE	67 William S. Canning Blvd., Tiverton, RI 02878
JOHNSTON OFFICE	1524 Atwood Avenue, Suite 321, Johnston, RI 02919
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