

# Eczema or Atopic Dermatitis

#### What is Eczema?

Eczema is an itchy inflammation of the skin. It is a chronic disorder which may be associated with asthma or hay fever.

## Signs and Symptoms

Red to brownish-gray colored patches form on the skin, most commonly in the skin folds; thick, cracked or scaly skin; severe itching, especially at night; small, raised fluid filled bumps appear when the skin is scratched.

### **Complications**

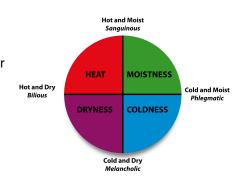
Scratching frequently results in the skin becoming hard, leathery, raw, darker than normal, and permanently scarred; infections can appear on the skin. Scratching can also result in open sores developing, which are sensitive to the touch, and susceptible to infection. Eczema may affect the eyes, resulting in itching in and around the eyelids. This may lead to permanent eye damage.

#### What Causes Eczema?

The exact cause of eczema is unknown, but its predisposition is thought to have a hereditary or temperament component. Stress and other emotional disorders may worsen eczema. Eczema is more common in children.

#### The Tibb View of Eczema

Eczema is linked to qualities of heat with either dryness or moistness as it is an inflammatory skin condition which present with itchy skin either associated with dry, scaly skin, or the presentation of discharge through damaged skin. Eczema may affect children of any temperament. The presentation of the eczema often differs according to the temperament. Melancholic children present with dry flaky skin, phlegmatic/sanguinous temperamental combination are more likely to develop "wet" eczema, and bilious children present with red, raw and highly inflamed skin.



## **Management of Eczema**

Treatment and management is aimed at **reducing the excess qualities** associated with eczema, by implementing Tibb Lifestyle Factors that will either **increase the qualities of cold and moistness** in patients with symptoms of **excess heat and dryness**, and **cold and dryness** in patients with **excess heat with moistness**. This assists Physis in addressing both the symptoms and the causes of eczema.

#### Tibb Lifestyle Factors

#### In Eczema associated with qualities of heat with dryness:

#### **Food and Drink**

- Eat **mostly Cold and Moist foods -** such as cucumber, watermelon, carrots and broccoli, **followed by Cold and Dry foods -** like yogurt, citrus fruit and coconut oil.
- Eat **less Hot and Moist foods** such as ginger, white flour products, cheese and sugar, and the **least amount of Hot and Dry foods** like eggs, fish, walnuts and garlic.

## In Eczema associated with qualities of heat with moistness: Food and Drink

- Eat mostly Cold and Dry foods like yogurt, citrus fruit and coconut oil, followed by
  Cold and Moist foods such as cucumber, watermelon, carrots and broccoli.
- Eat **less Hot and Dry foods** like eggs, fish, walnuts and garlic and the **least amount of Hot and Moist foods** such as ginger, white flour products, cheese and sugar.

## Additional dietary Advice for Eczema associated with both heat with dryness and heat with moistness

- Avoid cashew nuts, pecan nuts, peanuts, cheese and other dairy products, pickles, processed meats, chocolate, wheat, strawberries, fats and fried foods.
- Try a gluten free diet for six weeks. Slowly reintroduce gluten foods one at a time back into your diet, and note any changes.
- Drink Rooibos tea (without milk and sugar). This has cooling properties and is rich in antioxidants.
- Avoid simple sugars and white flour products. Opt instead for brown variants and use honey, xylitol or Stevia to replace sugar.
- Camomile can be taken internally, as it strengthens and calms nerves. It can be used as well as on the skin to reduce skin inflammation.

#### Other Lifestyle Advice

- Use non-perfumed moisturising lotions for bathing, such as aqueous creams or Episone-E. Add a half cup of boiling water to five Rooibos teabags, add to Episone-E lotion, and apply to the affected skin as a moisturiser. This helps reduce itchiness and inflammation. A tablespoon of honey can be added.
- Keeping the home humidified helps relieve symptoms of eczema linked to heat with dryness.
- Taking fewer showers and baths reduces the loss of the natural skin protective oils.
- Take measures to keep the colon clean. Use regular enemas to help rid the body of toxins.

#### **Herbal Remedy**

- Drink two to three tablespoons twice daily of pure Aloe Vera juice. This can also be applied directly over the skin.

# **Cold & Dry Foods**

Meats	Vegetables	Fruits	Nuts	Grains & Seeds	Dairy Products	Oils	Spices & Herbs	Drinks	Flavourants	Condiments & Spreads	Confectionary & Desserts	Cereals	Dishes
beef	brussel sprouts	(all sour fruits)	peanuts	barley	sour cream	coconut oil	basil	coffee		balsamic		cornflakes	sour dishes
biltong (beef)	cabbage	green apples		beans(all types)	egg white	corn oil	tamarind	ice		vinegar		maltabella	
crabs	cauliflower	cherries, coconut		corn	sour milk	sesame oil		sour fruit juices		peanut butter		mielie meal	
fish	eggplant	china/dry fruit		couscous	yoghurt			tea (black)		pickles		millet	
knuckles	green beans	granadilla		lentils						tomato sauce			
mussels	mushrooms	grape fruit		maize						worcestershire			
ostrich	peas	lemon, lime		mielies						sauce			
oysters	potatoes	naartjies, oranges		popcorn						vinegar			
pork	sauerkraut	pineapple,plums		poppy seeds									
snails	tomatoes	prunes, pomegranate		samp									
snoek		raspberries		sesame seeds									
tripe		strawberries											
tuna		sultanas											

## **Cold & Moist Foods**

Meats	Vegetables	Fruits	Nuts	Grains & Seeds	Dairy Products	Oils	Spices & Herbs	Drinks	Flavourants	Condiments & Spreads	Confectionary & Desserts	Cereals	Dishes
duck	beetroot	apricot	macadamia	cucumber seeds	coconut milk		cardamom	milk shakes	fructose		custard	pronutro	
rabbit	baby marrow	cranberries		linseed	cow's milk		coriander	rooibos	glucose		ice cream	rice crispies	
	butternut	figs		melon seeds	goats milk		cumin	sugar cane	rose syrup		sago		
	broccoli, carrots	kiwi fruit		pumpkin seeds	buttermilk		vanilla	juice		1			
	cucumber	litchis, melons		rice cakes	butter			water					
	squash	mulberries		rice	margarine								
	lady fingers (okra)	pawpaw, pears		semolina	rice milk								
	lettuce	prickly pears			soya milk								
	pumpkin	quince											
	radish, sprouts	spanspek											
	soya beans	sweet apples											
	tofu												
	zucchini												

# **Hot & Dry Foods**

Meats	Vegetables	Fruits	Nuts	Grains & Seeds	Dairy Products	Oils	Spices & Herbs	Drinks	Flavourants	Condiments & Spreads	Confectionary & Desserts	Cereals	Dishes
all small bird	bitter gourd	avocado	cashews	celery seeds	eggs	mustard oil	aniseed	alcohol	pungent and	chilli sauce			spicy dishes
meat	celery	grapes	hazel nuts	chickpeas			cinnamon	grape juice	bitter	mustard sauce			
chicken	green pepper		pecan nuts	fenugreek seeds			cloves, garlic	herbal teas	flavourants	peri-peri			
lobsters	leek		walnuts	gram flour			green/red chilli	(see herbs)		sauce			
mackerel	onion			mustard seeds			fenugreek						
oily fish	red pepper			papad			lavender						
pilchards	yellow pepper						nutmeg						
prawns							oregano						
sardines							paprika						
							parsley						
							rocket, rosemary						
							saffron						
							tarragon						

## **Hot & Moist Foods**

Meats	Vegetables	Fruits	Nuts	Grains & Seeds	Dairy Products	Oils	Spices & Herbs	Drinks	Flavourants	Condiments & Spreads	Confectionary & Desserts	Cereals	Dishes
buck	artichokes	bananas	almonds	bread	clarified butter	castor oil	bay leaves	green tea	honey	mayonnaise	biscuits	all bran flakes	sweet dishes
goat	asparagus	dates	brazil nuts	bulgar wheat	condensed milk	olive oil	black pepper	hot water	molasses		cakes	bran	
goose	olives	guavas	pistachios	flour	cheese	sunflower oil	cayenne pepper	juices	salt		chocolate	honey smaks	
lamb	spinach	mangoes	apricot kernels	pasta	cream cheese		chives	(see fruits)	sugar		liquorice	muesli	
liver	spring onion	peaches		rye bread	mother's milk		ginger, fennel	herbal teas			vermicelli	nutri-k	
mutton	sweet potato	papaya		sunflower seeds	(for babies)		green masala	(see herbs)				nutrific	
turkey	turnips			wheat	fresh cream		marjoram					oats	
				macaroni			mint, sage					puffed wheat	
				dill seeds			soya sauce					taystee wheat	
							thyme,turmeric					weetbix	
							watercress						
							white pepper						