



**Written by Pharmacist Chin Fu Yeong,
B.Sc (Pharm) Hons**

For more health advice and information, speak to any of our pharmacists today!

References and Sources

Alison Blenkinsopp, Paul Paxton & John Blenkinsopp, Symptoms in the Pharmacy - A Guide to Management of Common Illness, 6th Edition (2009), p139-147

WS Pray (1999), Non-prescription Product Therapeutics, Contact Dermatitis, p565 - 578

Allergic Rhinitis
Alison Blenkinsopp, Paul Paxton & John Blenkinsopp, Symptoms in the Pharmacy - A Guide to Management of Common Illness, 6th Edition (2009), p52-60

WS Pray (1999), Non-prescription Product Therapeutics, Allergic Rhinitis, p191 - 202

Cold and Cough
Alison Blenkinsopp, Paul Paxton & John Blenkinsopp, Symptoms in the Pharmacy - A Guide to Management of Common Illness, 6th Edition (2009), p19 - 43

WS Pray (1999), Non-prescription Product Therapeutics, Common Cold, p203 - 231



care for life

www.unity.com.sg

A Wellness Brand of NTUC Unity Healthcare Group

UNITY WELLNESS GUIDE

Eczema



 **unity** *care for life*

What is eczema?

Eczema (atopic dermatitis) is a chronic, recurring inflammatory skin disease that is most common in people with a family history of an atopic disorder.

Common Atopic Disorders

- Asthma
- Hay fever
- Eczema

Characteristics of Eczema

- Patchy, dry, itchy and scaly skin.
- In severe cases, skin may weep, bleed and crust over.

What causes eczema?

While the causes of eczema are unknown, we do know that certain triggers can worsen it. People with eczema may have different triggers and when eczema gets worse, it is called a flare-up.

A flare-up occurs when the immune system in skin overreacts to environmental or emotional triggers. This reaction results in symptoms such as itching.

People with eczema should work closely with their healthcare providers to figure out what triggers their eczema flare-ups. Then they can take steps to avoid these triggers.

Common Flare-up Triggers

- Changes in temperature or humidity.
- Chemical irritants, such as pesticides, paint strippers, alcohol, astringents, perfumes, harsh soaps, detergents or household cleaners.
- Physical irritants, such as clothes made of rough or scratchy fabrics like wool or burlap.
- Allergies, such as to dust, pollen, mould or animal dander.
- Intense emotions or stress.
- Infections of any kind.

What are the signs and symptoms of eczema?

Although eczema-afflicted patches of skin can occur anywhere, certain areas are more prone to this condition.

Commonly Affected Areas

Neck	Front of elbows	Face
Hands	Upper Chest	Wrists
Feet	Back of knees	Ankles

Eczema can also affect the skin around eyes, including eyelids. Scratching can cause redness and swelling around your eyes. Rubbing or scratching of this area may result in patchy loss of eyebrow hair and eyelashes.

Symptoms of Eczema

- Red to brownish-grey patches.
- Itching, which may be especially severe at night.
- Small, raised bumps, which may leak fluid and crust over when scratched.
- Thickened, cracked or scaly skin.
- Raw, sensitive skin from scratching.

How do I differentiate eczema from other skin conditions?

Your healthcare provider is your best source of information and diagnosis. While eczema is very common, it can sometimes mimic other skin diseases, such as dandruff (seborrheic dermatitis), psoriasis or contact dermatitis.

Is eczema contagious?

No, eczema is not contagious.

Can stress cause eczema?

Stress does not actually cause eczema, but it can trigger a flare-up or make the condition worse. Feelings like anger or frustration can also aggravate eczema.

Because emotional stress can aggravate the condition, patients with eczema may find that stress management and relaxation techniques can decrease their chances of having flare-ups.

Can you get eczema for the first time as an adult?

While it is not common for someone to have eczema for the first time as an adult, it can happen.



Once you get eczema, can you get it again?

Eczema is a chronic, recurring skin condition which can come and go for months and even years. In most people, there are times when eczema gets worse, followed by times when it gets better or even seems to disappear, known as remissions.

Eczema tends to first occur in babies and children. However, many children with eczema seems to grow out of it, they can have a permanent remission. For these children, their skin may stay dry and easily irritated.

Is there a cure for eczema?

While there is no cure for eczema, there are treatments and techniques that can help. Your healthcare professional is your best source of advice when eczema flares up.

Steps to Control Eczema

- Identify and avoid triggers that worsen inflammation.
- Apply anti-itch cream or calamine lotion to affected areas.
- Avoid scratching whenever possible.
- Apply cool compression.
- Use mild soaps without dyes or perfumes.
- Moisturise your skin.
- Use a humidifier.
- Wear cool, smooth-textured cotton clothing.