

Avoiding Eczema-related Infections

Eczema is a skin condition with no known cure. Although it can be unpleasant, unsightly and very uncomfortable, eczema is neither infectious nor contagious. However, sometimes a case of eczema can become so severe that secondary infections can result. Dryness is the greatest enemy of eczema-prone skin. It can cause all symptoms to worsen. When the skin's epidermal layer loses a large quantity of moisture, it creates an environment in which the skin is susceptible to invasion from a number of infections, some viral while others are bacterial.

Some examples of

secondary infections that can develop along with eczema include warts, herpes simplex, viral molluscum, as well as staphylococcal and streptococcal bacterial skin infections. Other secondary skin problems that can arise as a result of the worsening of eczema include, but are not limited to, papules, small raised rough bumps on the skin, crusting as well as scaling of the skin, cheilitis, inflammation around the lip area, and eyelids that darken greatly.

One of the simplest ways to

prevent eczema-related infection is to keep your skin well moisturized. Use a gentle moisturizer for eczema-prone skin such as Aquaphor, Alpha Keri, Eucerin, Curel, Lubriderm, Moisturel or Vaseline a minimum of twice daily. Do not allow your skin to become parched. Moisturize it instead so it never gets to the point of feeling arid. Hydrate yourself from the inside as well. It is vital to drink six to eight glasses of purified water daily. This will help flush your organs and safeguard against infections.

Broken or cracked skin is an entryway for bacteria into

the skin. Avoid this by resisting the urge to scratch. Use cortisone cream or extra moisturizer in case of itches. For added protection, keep your fingernails short so you won't be able to cause as much damage to your skin if you do scratch. If you have a problem with scratching in your sleep, consider investing in a pair of thin gloves and wearing them as you sleep. If your skin does have cracks or breaks in it despite your best efforts to prevent them, liberally apply antibiotic cream to them and, if necessary, bandage the wounded area until it begins to heal.

Other

ways to help avoid eczema-related infections include using an air-purification system in your home or workplace to filter out air particles that could lead to flare-ups in your skin condition. Additionally, use a humidifier in your home to keep moisture in the air and thus not contribute to excessively drying out your skin. Increase your dietary consumption of fatty fish such as sardines and salmon. Also increase your intake of raw seeds such as flax seeds or pumpkin seeds. Flax seed is also available in oil or powder form. These foods all contain high amounts of omega-3 fatty acids, which are an excellent for reducing swelling in the skin. As much as possible, avoid consuming trans-fatty acids in the form of hydrogenated oils as these tend to promote disease as well as decreasing the immune system effectiveness.