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URL of this page: <https://medlineplus.gov/eczema.html>

Eczema

Also called: Dermatitis

Eczema is a term for several different types of skin swelling. Eczema is also called dermatitis. Most types cause dry, itchy skin and rashes [<https://medlineplus.gov/rashes.html>] on the face, inside the elbows and behind the knees, and on the hands and feet. Scratching the skin can cause it to turn red, and to swell and itch even more.

Eczema is not contagious. The cause of eczema is unknown. It is likely caused by both genetic and environmental factors. Eczema may get better or worse over time, but it is often a long-lasting disease. People who have it may also develop hay fever and asthma.



The most common type of eczema is atopic dermatitis. It is most common in babies and children, but adults can have it too. As children who have atopic dermatitis grow older, this problem may get better or go away. But sometimes the skin may stay dry and get irritated easily.

Treatments may include medicines, skin creams, light therapy, and good skin care. You can prevent some types of eczema by avoiding:



- Things that irritate your skin, such as certain soaps, fabrics, and lotions
- Stress [<https://medlineplus.gov/stress.html>]
- Things you are allergic to [<https://medlineplus.gov/allergy.html>] to, such as food, pollen, and animals

NIH: National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases

Start Here

- Atopic Dermatitis [<https://www.niams.nih.gov/health-topics/atopic-dermatitis>]
 (National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.niams.nih.gov/es/informacion-de-salud/dermatitis-atopica>]
- Eczema and Atopic Dermatitis [<https://familydoctor.org/condition/eczema-and-atopic-dermatitis/?adfree=true>]
(American Academy of Family Physicians)
Also in Spanish [<https://es.familydoctor.org/condicion/eccema-y-dermatitis-atopica-es/?adfree=true>]
- Rash Decisions: How to Deal With Itchy, Red Skin [<https://newsinhealth.nih.gov/2020/01/rash-decisions>]
 (National Institutes of Health)
Also in Spanish [<https://salud.nih.gov/recursos-de-salud/nih-noticias-de-salud/decisiones-sobre-las-erupciones>]


Treatments and Therapies

- Eczema Treatment Research [<https://www.niaid.nih.gov/diseases-conditions/eczema-treatment>]
 (National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases)
- Wet Wrap Therapy for Severe Eczema [<https://www.niaid.nih.gov/diseases-conditions/wet-wrap-therapy>]
 (National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases)

Specifics

- Dyshidrosis [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/dyshidrosis/symptoms-causes/syc-20352342?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
- Nummular Dermatitis [<https://www.merckmanuals.com/home/skin-disorders/itching-and-dermatitis/nummular-dermatitis?query=Nummular%20Dermatitis>] (Merck & Co., Inc.)
- Seborrheic Dermatitis Overview [<https://www.aad.org/public/diseases/a-z/seborrheic-dermatitis-overview?NoAds>] (American Academy of Dermatology)

Genetics

- Atopic dermatitis: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/atopic-dermatitis>]  (National Library of Medicine)


Images

- Dyshidrotic Dermatitis [<https://skinsight.com/skin-conditions/dyshidrotic-dermatitis/?lmiw9cApl=1>] (VisualDX)
- Eczema (Atopic Dermatitis) Condition, Treatments and Pictures for Adults [<https://skinsight.com/skin-conditions/atopic-dermatitis-eczema/?lmiw9cApl=1>] (VisualDX)
- Nummular Dermatitis [<https://skinsight.com/skin-conditions/nummular-dermatitis/?lmiw9cApl=1>] (VisualDX)




Test Your Knowledge

- Skin Allergy Quiz [<https://www.aaaai.org/conditions-treatments/allergies/skin-allergy/skin-allergy-quiz>] (American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology)

Statistics and Research

- Eczema (Atopic Dermatitis) [<https://www.niaid.nih.gov/diseases-conditions/eczema-atopic-dermatitis>]  (National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases)

Clinical Trials


- ClinicalTrials.gov: Dermatitis [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Dermatitis%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)
- ClinicalTrials.gov: Dermatitis, Atopic [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Dermatitis,+Atopic%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)
- ClinicalTrials.gov: Eczema [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Eczema%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)

Journal Articles

References and abstracts from MEDLINE/PubMed (National Library of Medicine)

- Article: Effect of early life exposure to Ozone and particulate matter on... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40721768>]
- Article: Effects of residential greenness during pregnancy on childhood asthma, rhinitis, eczema,... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40311892>]
- Article: Prenatal exposure to mixtures of phthalates and bisphenol A and eczema... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40274086>]
- Eczema -- see more articles [<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=%22Eczema%22%5Bmajr%3Anoexp%5D+AND+humans%5Bmh%5D+AND+english%5Bla%5D+AND+%22last+1+Year%22+%5Bedat%5D+NOT+%28letter%5Bpt%5D+OR+case+reports%5Bpt%5D+OR+editorial%5Bpt%5D+OR+comment%5Bpt%5D%29+AND+free+full+text%5Bsb%5D+>]

Find an Expert

- American Academy of Dermatology [<https://www.aad.org/?NoAds>]
- Find a Dermatologist [<https://find-a-derm.aad.org/>] (American Academy of Dermatology)
- Find an Allergist/Immunologist [<https://allergist.aaaai.org/find/>] (American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology)
- National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases [<https://www.niams.nih.gov/>] 
- Also in Spanish [<https://www.niams.nih.gov/es/portal-en-espanol>]

Children

- Eczema (Atopic Dermatitis) (For Parents) [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/eczema-atopic-dermatitis.html>]
(Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/eczema-atopic-dermatitis.html>]
- Eczema (Atopic Dermatitis) in Children [<https://skinsight.com/skin-conditions/atopic-dermatitis-eczema/child/?Imiw9cApl=1>]
(VisualDX)
- Eczema (Atopic Dermatitis) in Infants [<https://skinsight.com/skin-conditions/atopic-dermatitis-eczema/infant/?Imiw9cApl=1>]
(VisualDX)
- Eczema and Mental Health: 5 Ways to Support Your Child's Well-Being [<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/skin/Pages/5-ways-to-support-your-child-with-eczema.aspx>] (American Academy of Pediatrics)
- Eczema in Babies and Children [<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/skin/pages/Eczema.aspx>]
 (American Academy of Pediatrics)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.healthychildren.org/spanish/health-issues/conditions/skin/paginas/eczema.aspx>]
- How to Treat and Control Eczema (Atopic Dermatitis) Rashes in Children [<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/skin/Pages/How-to-Treat-and-Control-Eczema-Rashes-in-Children.aspx>]
 (American Academy of Pediatrics)

Teenagers

- Eczema [<https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/eczema.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/teens/eczema.html>]
- Eczema in Teens: How to Choose Skin, Hair and Makeup Products Safely [<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/skin/Pages/eczema-in-teens-skin-and-hair-care-tips.aspx>] (American Academy of Pediatrics)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.healthychildren.org/spanish/health-issues/conditions/skin/paginas/eczema-in-teens-skin-and-hair-care-tips.aspx>]

Women

- Atopic Dermatitis (While Pregnant or Breastfeeding) [<https://mothertobaby.org/fact-sheets/atopic-dermatitis/>]
(Organization of Teratology Information Specialists)
Also in Spanish [<https://mothertobaby.org/es/hojas-informativas/dermatitis-atopica/>]

Patient Handouts

- Atopic dermatitis [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000853.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000853.htm>]
- Atopic dermatitis - children - homecare [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000939.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/patientinstructions/000939.htm>]
- Atopic dermatitis - self-care [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000418.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/patientinstructions/000418.htm>]
- Nummular eczema [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000870.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000870.htm>]
- Pompholyx eczema [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000832.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000832.htm>]

• Seborrheic dermatitis [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000963.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)

Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000963.htm>]



MEDICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA

Atopic dermatitis [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000853.htm>]

Atopic dermatitis - children - homecare [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000939.htm>]

Atopic dermatitis - self-care [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000418.htm>]

Erythroderma [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001610.htm>]

Keratosis pilaris [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001462.htm>]

Nummular eczema [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000870.htm>]

Pompholyx eczema [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000832.htm>]

Seborrheic dermatitis [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000963.htm>]

Related Health Topics

Rashes [<https://medlineplus.gov/rashes.html>]

National Institutes of Health

The primary NIH organization for research on *Eczema* is the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases [<http://www.niams.nih.gov/>]

Other Languages

Find health information in languages other than English [<https://medlineplus.gov/languages/eczema.html>] on *Eczema*

NIH MedlinePlus Magazine

Eczema and the Cold: How to Avoid Flare-Ups This Winter [<https://magazine.medlineplus.gov/article/eczema-and-the-cold>]

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