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## Agonizing eczema



While acne and wrinkles usually dominate much of the spotlight on skin concerns, one skin condition that affects babies, teens and adults alike is eczema and for those who have this condition, it is not just dry skin.

"It is a relatively common problem," says Dr. John Goldhar of CosmedixMD in Toronto. "You get various degrees of eczema from very mild to debilitating. In some cases 60-90% of the body is affected by an itchy red scaling or oozing rash."

According to the American Academy of Dermatology (AAD) approximately 10 to 20 per cent of the world's population at some point during childhood is affected by eczema, a relapsing, and very itchy rash. The academy goes on to explain that although the causes of eczema are unknown, the condition appears to be an abnormal response of the body's immune system.

"It is usually a genetically derived health problem," explains Dr. Goldhar. "It is often associated with asthma, hay fever and a tendency to develop hives. There can be a number of different triggers, including stress, environmental effects very cold and dry, irritants like wool, strong detergents or fabric softeners, and sometimes certain foods can trigger a flare up. It is usually several factors that are involved. I find that several have allergies to dogs and cats."

"Eczema is not contagious and, like many diseases, currently cannot be cured. However, for most patients the condition may be managed well with treatment or avoidance of triggers," writes the AAD on EczemaNet.

While eczema does not look the same on everyone, it is most often characterized by dry, red, extremely itchy patches on the skin. "Eczema is sometimes referred to as 'the itch that rashes,' since the itch, when scratched, results in the appearance of the rash," explains the AAD and also mentioned by Dr. Goldhar.

Both children and adults are affected by eczema and although there is no known cause for the disease, it often affects people with a family history of allergies.

While there are several treatment options available to control eczema, including moisturizers and in severe cases prescription corticosteroid creams and ointments, there are a few tips on taking care of your skin to avoid flare-ups.



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Editor's choice

### Beauty

- ▣ Sephora
- ▣ LUSH
- ▣ Cake
- ▣ MAC Cosmetics
- ▣ Dove
- ▣ L'Oreal Paris Canada
- ▣ Dior
- ▣ Cargo Cosmetics
- ▣ The Body Shop

### Shopping

- ▣ Urban Outfitters
- ▣ Aritzia
- ▣ Browns Shoes
- ▣ Birks
- ▣ H & M
- ▣ Holt Renfrew
- ▣ Zara



**Agonizing eczema  
Advice for everyday**

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