

# Homoeopathic Management in Eczema

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## Abstract

It is a common chronic, relapsing skin disease characterized by pruritus, disrupted epidermal barrier function, and immunoglobulin E-mediated sensitization to food and environmental allergens.

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## Introduction

The terms 'eczema' and 'dermatitis' are synonymous. There are a number of clinical variants, which are all characterised by acute or chronic inflammation and spongiosis (oedema) of the dermis and epidermis on histology.<sup>1</sup>

## Atopic eczema

Generalised, prolonged hypersensitivity to common environmental antigens, including house dust mites and pollen, is the hallmark of atopy and there is a genetic predisposition to over-production of IgE. Clinical features of atopic eczema presents with redness, severe itch and swelling. Papules and vesicles may be evident, along with cracking and scaling of the skin, which is excessively dry. The distribution of atopic eczema varies with the age of the patient: in infancy and adulthood the eczema tends to affect the face and trunk, while in childhood it affects the limb flexures, wrists and the ankles

## Seborrhoeic eczema

It is characterised by a red scaly rash, classically affects the central chest, scalp (dandruff), nasolabial folds, eyebrows and central face. It is thought to be a reaction to Pityrosporum yeast infection of the skin.

## Discoid eczema

It consists of discrete coin shaped eczematous lesions, which may become infected, most commonly on the limbs of men

## Irritant eczema and allergic contact eczema

Eczematous eruptions of the skin in response to exogenous agents. Detergents, alkalis, acids, solvents and abrasive dusts are common causes of irritant eczema. Allergic contact eczema represents a type IV hypersensitivity reaction to an exogenous agent. Nickel, parabens (a preservative in cosmetics and creams), colophony (in sticking plasters) and balsam of Peru (in perfumes) are common causes of allergic

contact eczema. Both types of eczema account for a large amount of work loss. Patch testing may be helpful in diagnosis

### **Asteatotic eczema**

This occurs in dry skin, most often on the lower legs of the elderly, as a rippled or ‘crazy paving’ pattern of fine fissuring on an erythematous background. Low humidity caused by central heating, over-washing and diuretics are contributory factors

### **Gravitational (stasis) eczema**

This occurs on the lower legs and is often associated with signs of venous insufficiency (oedema, red or bluish discoloration, loss of hair, induration, haemosiderin pigmentation and ulceration).

### **Lichen simplex**

This describes a localised plaque of lichenified eczema caused by repeated rubbing or scratching. Common sites include the neck, lower legs and anogenital area.

### **Pompholyx**

Intensely itchy vesicles and bullae occur on the palms, palmar surface and sides of the fingers and soles. Pompholyx may have several causes, which include atopic eczema, irritant and contact allergic dermatitis and fungal infection.<sup>1</sup>

### **Complications<sup>2</sup>**

Asthma and hay fever

Food allergies

Chronic itchy, scaly skin

Patches of skin that's darker or lighter than the surrounding area

Skin infections

Irritant hand dermatitis

Allergic contact dermatitis<sup>3</sup>

Mental health conditions

### **PREVENTION <sup>2</sup>**

- Moisturize your skin at least twice a day.
- Take a daily bath or shower
- Use a gentle, non-soap cleanser.
- Pat dry- After bathing, gently pat the skin with a soft towel. Apply moisturizer while your skin is still damp.

### **Homoeopathic medicines**

**Asterias rubens**- Eczema on thigh, legs, ankles and instep, itching vesicles break and form small ulcers which spread superficially, scrofulous and sycotic constitution.<sup>3</sup>

**Bromium**- Eczema covers entire scalp like a cap, dirty-looking, offensive discharge, scaly tender. Mouth parched and dry. Swelling of glands like stony-hard especially on throat and lower jaw. Moist eruption in

perineum and armpits.<sup>3</sup>

**Cicuta virosa-** Eczema capitis, no itching. Whitish scurf on chin and lower lip with oozing. Long lasting purulent eruptions, confluent, drying down to hard lemon-coloured crust, like dried honey.<sup>3</sup> Suppressed eruption causes brain disease. Elevated eruptions, as large as peas.<sup>4</sup>

**Clematis-** Eruptions appears on back part of neck and head, sometimes extending over face, itching and tingling, drying into scabs. Eruption moist during increasing moon, dry during waning moon.<sup>3</sup> More rawness aggravate from washing. Moist alternating with dry scabs.<sup>5</sup>

**Copaiva officinalis-** Eczema consisting of small vesicles, pricking and itching in skin. Pustular and popular eruption occurring in groups with pain in limbs and disordered stomach.<sup>3</sup>

**Curare-** Moist eczema of face and behind the ears in scrofulous children. Especially on scrotum and in right popliteal space.<sup>3</sup> Itching with hunger.<sup>6</sup>

**Juglans cinerea-** Eczema of wrists and hands, one attack hardly subside before another sets in. Ichor oozing out when using hands with soreness and intolerable itching, depriving patient of sleep. Dyspepsia with bronchial irritation and cough.<sup>3</sup> Eczema especially on lower extremities and sacrum. Erythema and erysipelatos redness.<sup>4</sup> Itching pricking when heated by over exertion.<sup>6</sup>

**Lappa major-** Badly smelling, moist and grayish white crust. Most of hair gone and eruption extending to face.<sup>3</sup>

**Nux juglans-** Burning, itching vesicles upon a cracked surface with a greenish discharge which stiffens the linen. Large blood boils in hepatic region and on shoulders, very painful.<sup>3</sup>

**Oleander-** Vesicular eruption about the head of children, with smooth, shining surface, with drops of serum standing out here and there and scab turning brown when dry. Humid scaly eruption on back part of behind ears and head, with itching and biting as if from lice.<sup>3</sup> Gnawing itching, which compels scratching, sometimes when undressing. Skin very sensitive with excoriation and redness, even when gently scratches.<sup>6</sup>

**Oxalicum acidum-** Exceedingly sensitive skin with vesicular eruption, suffers from use of sugar and sweets.<sup>3</sup> Skin very sensitive, sensation during shaving as from chafing. Marbled skin.<sup>6</sup>

**Petroleum-** Eczema. Rhagades worse in winter. Itching at night. Skin dry, constricted, rough, very sensitive, leathery and cracked. Slightest scratch makes skin suppurate. Thick, greenish crusts, burning and itching. Cracks bleed easily.<sup>4</sup> Various forms of eczema. Eczema of the scalp, especially of the occiput.<sup>7</sup>

**Psorinum-** Eczema behind ears. Crusty eruption all over. Intolerable itching agg. Heat of bed; he scratches raw or until it bleeds.<sup>4</sup> Bleeding eczema of the scalp and the face, the crust covers the scalp and hair falls out. Oozing lifts up the crusts and exposes new vesicles it looks like a raw beef and it tingles so that the child cannot keep its fingers off it.<sup>7</sup> Dry and scaly eruption disappearing during but reappearing when the cold weather comes on.<sup>3</sup>

**Ranunculus bulbosus-** Blister like eruption in palms.<sup>4</sup> Vesicular eruption on face, as from a burn, smarts as if scalded, vesiculation followed by scabbing and this by the renewal of vesicles, attended by itching and burning and formation by horny, hard scabs.<sup>3</sup> Eczema attended with thickening of the skin.<sup>5</sup>

**Rhus toxicodendron-** Vesicles on a red erysipelatos surface, chiefly about the genitals and on hairy parts, with itching, agg after scratching, in cold rainy weather and at night. (ea Farrington). Burning eczematous eruptions with tendency to scale formation.<sup>4</sup>

**Scrofularia nodosa-** Eczema of ear, stinging, itching, hot, penetrating into the meatus, with pustules springing up on the side of the face.<sup>3</sup> Prickling itching, worse back of hand.<sup>4</sup>

**Sulphur-** Dry, offensive, scabby, easily bleeding, burning eruption, beginning along margin of hair from

ear to ear posteriorly with sore pain and cracks.<sup>3</sup> Itching, burning worse from scratching and washing. Skin affection after local medication. Pruritis, especially from warmth.<sup>4</sup>

**Sumbul-** Eczema on left side of scalp in infants.<sup>3</sup>

**Terebinthinae oleum-** Infantile eczema in front of ear, tending to affect the eye, often alternating with otitis.<sup>3</sup> Violently itching vesicles. Excessive itching, stinging burning of skin.<sup>6</sup>

**Ustilago-** Eczema impetiginosum, whole scalp one filthy mass of inflammation, pustular ulceration of skin.<sup>3</sup> Two-thirds of the hair came out, the rest matted together, with oozing of watery serum from scalp. Eruption like rubeola on neck and chest, gradually extending to feet, joints and thickest on chest.<sup>6</sup>

**Viola tricolor-** Humid, miliary eruption on scalp, itching at night, breeding vermin, discharging pus and yellow water. Urine smells like cat's urine. Milk-crusts of children.<sup>3</sup> Eczema impetiginoides of the face.<sup>4</sup> Dry scabs over the whole body; when they are scratched they exude yellow water.<sup>6</sup>

### Discussion and conclusion

Eczema is a disease having its impact on body as well as on mind. Homoeopathic management aims to give a blissful life by improving the immune system of the individual by removing the toxins and above given specific medicines are used for the treatment of eczema. Homoeopathic medicines more effectively can make a radical improvement to the patient's quality of life.

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### Conflict of interest

None

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