DOCTOR DISCUSSION GUIDE

Managing Atopic Dermatitis

Atopic dermatitis, also called eczema, is a condition that causes a person's skin to be red, irritated and very itchy. With this condition, the immune system overreacts and causes an allergic reaction to non-harmful substances.

Vocabulary to Know

Your doctor might mention these common terms. Here's what they mean.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tr>
<td>Allergen</td>
<td>A substance in the environment that your body mistakenly labels as &quot;foreign&quot; or &quot;dangerous.&quot; Exposure to an allergen can cause an allergic reaction.</td>
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<td>Anti-inflammatory</td>
<td>Medications that counteract the inflammation caused by your overactive immune system.</td>
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<td>Antihistamines</td>
<td>Medications that are used to treat symptoms of an allergic reaction.</td>
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<td>Atopy Patch Test</td>
<td>An allergy test that involves placing small amounts of potential allergens on the skin of the back, usually for 48 hours, to help identify substances that trigger allergic reactions.</td>
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<td>Biologics</td>
<td>Drug therapy that is made from cells of living organisms (plants, animals, microorganisms, or humans).</td>
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<td>Calcineurin Inhibitors</td>
<td>Medications that suppress the immune system (immunosuppressants) to help decrease symptoms of atopic dermatitis.</td>
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<td>Flare-up</td>
<td>Worsening of symptoms, such as redness, itching, and irritation.</td>
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<td>Hypersensitivity</td>
<td>An overreaction of the immune system that occurs your body is exposed to an allergen.</td>
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<td>Topical Corticosteroids</td>
<td>Steroid anti inflammatory medication that is applied to the skin. These medications are often creams, ointments, gels, or lotions.</td>
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Questions to Ask
These questions will help you start a conversation with your doctor about how to best manage your atopic dermatitis.

About Symptoms
- Will treatment get rid of my symptoms completely?
- What makes my symptoms worse?

About Causes & Risk Factors
- Does atopic dermatitis run in families?
- What are common atopic dermatitis triggers?

About Diagnosis
- Do I need allergy testing?
- What is a patch test?

About Treatment
- What medications should I take?
- Will I need to use medication all the time, or just during a flare-up?
- Will steroid medications make me gain weight?
- Will I need allergy shots?
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These questions will help you start a conversation with your doctor about how to best manage your atopic dermatitis.

**About Coping**

- Are there home remedies for my condition?
- Is my condition triggered by stress?
- What type of moisturizer can I use on my skin?

**About Living with Atopic Dermatitis**

- How should I protect my skin against sun damage?
- Will skincare products should I avoid?
- Will eating more or less of some food help my condition?
- Do I face a greater risk for skin cancer?

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