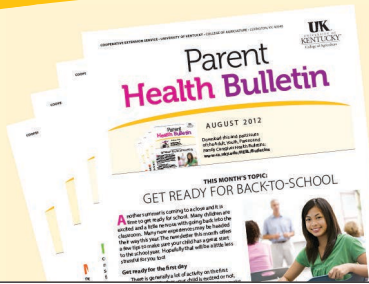


Parent Health Bulletin



NOVEMBER 2014

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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC:

DOES YOUR CHILD HAVE ECZEMA?

Have you ever noticed your child scratching a place on his body, even though he has not been around poison ivy and you know that he has not been bitten by a mosquito? If your child seems to have red, itchy skin and it seems to come and go, he or she could have eczema. Approximately one out of every ten children develops eczema.

Eczema makes the skin red, dry and sometimes very itchy. It may look like a type of rash. The appearance of the itchy, red skin may come and go. The good news is that many kids who have it growing up do not show signs of eczema when they get to be teens.

No one really knows why some people get eczema and some people do not. It is not something that your child can "catch" from another person. If your child's friend has eczema, it cannot be passed to your child. Many times, eczema runs in a family. So if you or a family member have eczema, it is possible that your child will have it as well.

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Most children who develop eczema do so before the age of 5.

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Several everyday items or certain conditions may cause skin reactions and cause a person with eczema to become itchy. These include certain:

- Soaps
- Detergents
- Perfumes
- Being hot and sweaty
- Dry air (often found in the winter)
- Scratchy fabrics (such as wool)

If your child has eczema, drinking water will help their skin stay moist.

If you notice your child has very itchy spots, you may want to take him or her to a healthcare provider. You will want to be sure that the itchy spots are not another type of rash. If your child does have eczema, the doctor may offer you suggestions on how to ease the itchiness. Your healthcare provider may also suggest that your child needs some medicine to help stop the inflammation and itchy, red, sore reaction.

Help your child from letting his or her skin get too dry. Lotion and skin creams can help. Other ways you can help your child include giving them the following advice:

- **Don't scratch!** Although it is very hard not to scratch, it makes the skin more sore and sometimes more itchy.
- **Drink lots of water.** Did you know that drinking water helps the skin stay moist?
- **Wear loose clothing.** Cotton fabrics or other soft, natural fabrics generally feel better on the skin.
- **Take short baths or showers and make sure the water is not too hot.** Hot water can sometimes make it itchier.
- **Stay calm.** When your child is stressed, it can cause him or her to become even itchier.

If your child has red, itchy, sore skin, he or she may have eczema. Talk with your child's healthcare provider to help him become less itchy and take care of his skin.

REFERENCE:

Nemours KidHealth (2012). Eek! It's Eczema!
http://kidshealth.org/kid/ill_injure/aches/eczema.html



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Health Bulletin

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