

Summer 2009

What's New at EASE?



We're going GREEN! All EASE materials are now available for download, simply click [here](#).

Ask the Doctor

You asked and we listened. An "Ask the Doctor" e-blast will now come straight to your inbox four times per year. Watch for the first blast this summer!

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Eczema and the Sun



There is no better way to spend a summer day than outside in the sun - especially after a long, cold Canadian winter. As the weather changes, you may notice changes in your skin. Some eczema patients may experience a worsening of the condition in the summer as a result of triggers such as heat, humidity and perspiration.

Others find summer is the season when they suffer least from their symptoms. Dr. Daniel More, allergist and blogger, discusses the benefits of the sun and vitamin D for eczema patients. He explains that people with atopic dermatitis have low amounts of cathelicidin, a protein that protects against skin infections from viruses, bacteria and fungi, in their skin. Such infections are known to worsen eczema symptoms. This may explain why the condition may get better with moderate amounts of sun exposure. Natural sun exposure leads to production of vitamin D within the skin, which may help with cathelicidin production. To read more, click [here](#)

FYI

The **Canadian Dermatology Association (CDA)** will launch its **Sun Awareness Week campaign** this summer. Finding the right sunscreen is often a problem, especially for eczema sufferers. The CDA provides the following tips:

- Look for a product with a minimum SPF of 30 to protect against the sun's ultraviolet B (UVB) and UVA rays. Broad spectrum sunscreens protect against both.
- Choose a sunscreen for sensitive skin that is labeled "chemical-free". These usually contain ingredients such as titanium dioxide and zinc oxide that reflect rather than absorb the sun's rays and are much less likely to cause a reaction.
- Don't forget your lips! Use a minimum SPF 30 lip balm and reapply every hour.

For more tips click [here](#).

Dr. Dytoc discusses steroid sensitivity

The use of steroids for the treatment of eczema was addressed in a recent survey of eczema sufferers conducted through the EASE program. The survey data was analyzed by **Dr. Marlene Dytoc, an Edmonton-based Dermatologist**, and revealed the following:

- 67% of respondents indicated that they use topical steroid treatments;
- 20% are currently experiencing steroid sensitivity or an allergic reaction to steroid treatments;
- 82% of sufferers have tried topical steroid treatments at some point;
- 81% reported being at least “somewhat” concerned about using steroids to treat their eczema;
- 56% of respondents were unaware of Topical Calcineurin Inhibitors (TCIs), a class of steroid-free eczema medications. TCI's have a favourable side-effect profile and high level of effectiveness.

To learn more about TCI treatments click [here](#)

Win the dryness battle

Moisturizers play a key role in relieving dry, itchy skin. For best results, moisturizers should be applied to damp skin within three minutes of getting out of a bath or shower. Drinking plenty of water will also help keep the skin well hydrated during the summer months.

Useful tips to seal in the moisture:

- Take at least one shower or bath per day using lukewarm water
- Each bath or shower should last for about 5 minutes
- Use a gentle fragrance-free soap or cleanser
- Use a soft towel, and gently pat away excess water - don't rub
- Re-apply moisturizers or sunscreen as needed throughout the day

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