

Conversations on skincare



Focus on **eczema**

TRAINING FOR THE PHARMACY TEAM

Eczema – also known as dermatitis – is a very common dry skin condition with a prevalence of up to **5% (in children and young adults approximately 10%).¹**



Eczema is a chronic, relapsing skin condition that causes the skin to become itchy, red, dry and cracked. Living with eczema can be deeply distressing and a real challenge to manage.

Eczema cannot be cured, but there are ways to help a sufferer manage the condition and its flare-ups. It is important that the pharmacy team can recognise eczema and understand the impact it can have on someone's life, and how they can offer the best advice for flare-up management.

This training looks at:

How pharmacy can make a difference to customers with eczema through **effective customer conversations**.

Look out for these logos throughout the booklet:

-  Tips and information to aid effective conversations.
-  When further advice/an intervention may be necessary.



On completing this training you will be able to:

- ✓ Identify and recognise eczema sufferers
- ✓ Offer advice on managing eczema triggers
- ✓ Understand and recommend the appropriate treatment
- ✓ Explain how Dermalex can help manage the symptoms of eczema.

Further reading:

- [nhs.uk/conditions/eczema-\(atopic\)/pages/introduction.aspx](https://nhs.uk/conditions/eczema-(atopic)/pages/introduction.aspx)
- eczema.org

Effective conversations

To truly make a difference to customers with eczema, we must first make an effort to understand them. In the pharmacy we often see the physical symptoms of skin conditions like eczema, but we don't always consider the emotional impact they may have on sufferers and how they may be affecting their daily lives. It is important that the pharmacy team understands these worries and offers appropriate support when giving advice.



who suffers from eczema?



what are the symptoms?



how long have they had it?



has any action been taken?



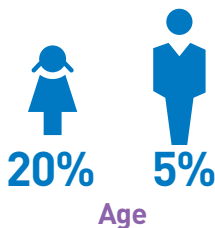
what other medication are they on?



To help you develop your confidence in conversations with customers, we will use a familiar questioning tool to show you how you can put your knowledge into practice.

Who suffers from eczema?

Eczema is most common among children but often improves significantly, or even clears completely, as they get older. However, the condition can continue into adulthood and can sometimes develop for the first time in adults.



20% of children.
Up to 5% of adults¹



Gender

Women and men are
equally affected

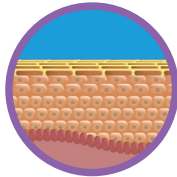


Genetics

Family history

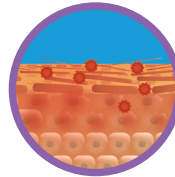
What are the symptoms?

Healthy skin



Skin is a barrier made of water, protein, lipids and minerals that protect our body from the external environment. Intercellular lipids play a crucial role in this.

Eczema skin

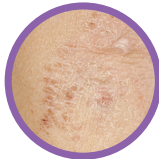
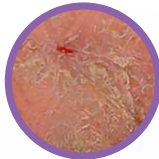
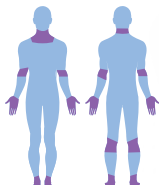
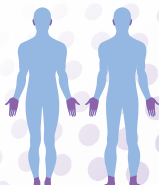


In eczema sufferers the skin's protective barrier is reduced due to breakdown of the intercellular lipids, causing:

- A loss of moisture, which dries the skin
- Skin to become vulnerable to external irritants and allergens. This can lead to inflammation resulting in scaly, red, itchy skin



Eczema is a highly individual condition which varies from person to person and comes in many different forms. Atopic eczema and contact eczema are the two most common types.

	Atopic eczema	Contact eczema
What are the symptoms?	<p>Dry, red, itchy, scaly skin, rashes</p> 	<p>Red, itchy, dry skin, blisters, cracks</p> 
Where?	<p>Commonly occurs in areas with skin folds</p> 	<p>Most commonly occurs on hands and feet</p> 

Living with eczema

The symptoms of eczema can have a major psychological impact on sufferers as well as a physical one. For example, the scratching associated with eczema can disrupt sleep and often make itching worse, resulting in a vicious cycle of itching and regular scratching.

This vicious cycle can lead to sleepless nights, and affect a person's ability to concentrate at work or school. As a result, customers may come into the pharmacy displaying signs of being very distressed and the empathy shown by you will make a huge difference to them and their wellbeing.



Refer a customer to the pharmacist or their GP when they report their condition is worsening (spreading to other areas, thickened areas of skin) or any of the following:

- **There are signs of infection (redness, swelling, inflammation, fever, pus filled blisters, crusting)**
- **Eczema is not responding to current treatment or there is an increase in flare-up frequency or size of area affected**
- **If you have concerns on the psychological impact of eczema on the sufferer**

Real life case study:






“As a mother, it's been difficult watching Maya scratch at her skin since she was born. Nearly two years later and despite several attempts, we were no further to finding effective relief for her.”

L.P., 39, London, UK on behalf of her daughter Maya, 18 months

How long have you had the symptoms for?



Pharmacy staff can make a difference by helping customers identify potential triggers which worsen their symptoms.

	Atopic eczema	Contact eczema
What are the triggers?	<p>Genetic</p>  <p>60% of children who have a parent with eczema also have eczema²</p>	<p>Inflammation of the skin occurs when you come into contact with a particular substance. It can be caused by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An irritant: a substance that directly damages the outer layer of skin e.g: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detergents • Perfumes/preservatives in cosmetics • Oils used in machines • Cement powders, dust and soil • Water • Plants • An allergen: a substance that causes the immune system to respond in a way that affects the skin e.g: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cosmetic ingredients • Metals such as nickel • Rubber, latex • Textiles <p>Contact eczema caused by irritants is more common, causing up to 8 in every 10 cases³</p>
	<p>Environment</p> 	
	<p>Allergens</p> 	



Think about your customer's occupation too, as their contact eczema may be linked to this. This type of dermatitis is more common in certain occupations, including: agricultural workers, beauticians and hairdressers, chemical/metal/electronic/construction workers, cleaners, cooks or health workers.

Has any **Action** been taken?

Depending on the severity of their symptoms, the customer may have tried some of the below:

	Emollients	Dermalex Eczema	Steroid
Mode of action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moisturises dry skin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unique formula Moisturises dry skin Treats eczema symptoms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduces redness and inflammation
Restrictions to treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acts only on the surface of the skin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possible side effects Not suitable for large areas or for long periods of use Age restrictions apply to over the counter (OTC) products**
Format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creams, lotions, ointments, soap-free cleansers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steroid-free cream, non-greasy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creams Ointments
How to use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liberally and frequently all the time, even when no symptoms are present 3 to 4 times a day After bathing or showering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To treat flare ups Apply twice a day and after bathing or showering Suitable for use on the face and on large body areas Suitable for long term use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To manage flare ups Apply 30 minutes after emollient FTU* ⁴ Not suitable for large areas or for long periods of use

* The amount of cream to use is sometimes given in fingertip units (FTUs), which is measured from the tip of an adult finger to the first crease of the finger. The recommended dosage in terms of FTUs will depend on what part of the body is being treated, for example 1 FTU for the hands, elbow and knees and 8 FTUs for the legs.

** Age restrictions for steroids include age 10 and over for hydrocortisone and age 12 and over for clobetasone butyrate.

Are you taking any other Medicines?

If the customer is taking any medication – either prescribed or over the counter (including herbal products) – you should refer them to the pharmacist. Certain medicines may trigger eczema flare-ups and the pharmacist will be able to discuss this with the customer.

Remember to ask your customer if they are using any medication for their eczema, such as a corticosteroid. Note: Dermalex Eczema can be used alongside other treatments.



Discuss with your pharmacist when to refer a customer to them based on the particular medicines they might be taking and list those medicines below:

Real life case study:



“ My eczema symptoms were exacerbated when I was feeling stressed and it became a vicious circle – the worse my symptoms became, the more stressed I got.

Three months ago, I started to notice relentless itching on my knees and elbows. It was becoming unbearable and it seemed nothing could soothe it. I was well aware that the more I scratched the worse it became, but it was impossible not to. ”

C.McC, 23, Rochdale, UK

Recommending Dermalex Eczema

Dermalex uniquely offers three effective yet tolerable treatments for mild and moderate symptoms of eczema.

- ✓ **EFFECTIVE:** 83% average improvement of eczema symptoms⁵
- ✓ **TOLERABLE:** Does not contain steroids, parabens or perfume



	Dermalex Eczema for babies and children		Dermalex Eczema	Dermalex Hand Irritation from allergic reactions
Indication	Relieves atopic eczema symptoms such as itching, dry skin, red spots, scaling and excoriations			Relieves contact eczema symptoms such as itching, red spots, dry skin, scaling, skin picking, and blistering
Who is it for?	Children and babies from 8 weeks		Adults and children 6Y+	Adults and children 6Y+
How to use	Apply twice a day on affected areas and always reapply after washing			

Real life case study:



“ My daughter Victoria suffers from eczema, with redness, dryness, itching and hard skin. We’ve tried to get a referral to a dermatologist but any prescription creams that we’ve been given haven’t been effective. In one case the eczema actually began to spread after using a steroid cream. Although it was obviously uncomfortable for Victoria, it was frustrating for me as a parent to see that no treatment was working. Since using Dermalex, Victoria’s eczema is finally under control. She’s sleeping normally and not waking up with unbearably itchy skin. ”

Dr I.B, 45, Manchester, UK on behalf of her daughter Victoria, 4

Real life case study:



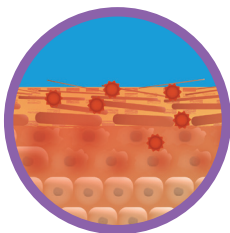
“ I have suffered from eczema for over seven years and it often makes me feel self-conscious, particularly as I experience flare ups on my eyelids, which means I cannot wear make-up.

Dermalex really appealed to me as it could be used on sensitive areas so I could confidently use it on my eyelids. Within a couple of days I noticed a reduction in redness and my skin felt much more hydrated – I couldn’t believe how quickly I was seeing results. ”

A.T, 31, Richmond, UK

How does **Dermalex Eczema** work?

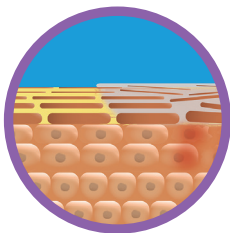
Eczema skin



The breakdown of the intercellular lipids causes:

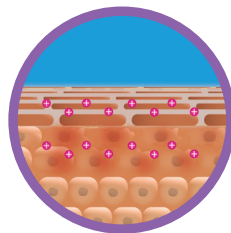
- 1) Loss of moisture which dries the skin
- 2) Skin to become vulnerable to external irritants and allergens, which can cause inflammation resulting in scaly, red, itchy skin

Dermalex Eczema unique mode of action



Dermalex's unique formula is absorbed into the upper layer of the skin:

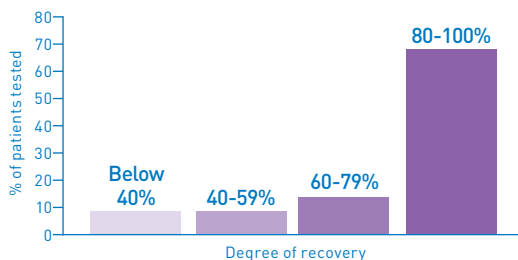
- Moisturises the affected area
- Replenishes the missing lipids to restore the skin's protective barrier
- Reduces any further moisture loss and prevents allergens and irritants from entering the skin



Subsequently, Dermalex's unique ionic **MagneoLite™ Complex** helps to help provide an environment which stimulates the skin's own repair mechanism.

By accelerating the barrier repair Dermalex is clinically proven to relieve eczema symptoms, without the need for steroids:

- The patients tested had an average improvement in their eczema symptoms of 83%⁵



Tips and advice

You may have customers who are embarrassed about their condition and will not readily approach you, which is why it is important to look out for signs where you need to be more proactive and approach customers yourself. These could include:

- Customers spending a lot of time at the eczema fixture, looking confused
- Customers looking at certain products for a long time.

If you need to start a conversation, you could try one of these helpful introductions:

- I notice you've been looking at these treatments – would you like some more information about them?
- Is there anything in particular you were looking for?
- Would you like to go into the consultation room to discuss things?



Customers may need extra advice on newer treatments like Dermalex as they may not be sure how they work or if they will be effective. By communicating well with customers and being knowledgeable about eczema and how it can be managed, they are much more likely to trust you and be responsive to your advice.

Real life case study:



Before



After



To see more real life stories, scan this code

“ I have had eczema on my face and my feet since I was five years old. It recently got to the point where I never got a good night's sleep because of the itching. I've suffered so much in the past because I don't want to use steroids, so I'm so glad to have found an effective product that is steroid-free.

“Using Dermalex has given me the ability to sleep again. I've avoided so many social events in the past because I've been so embarrassed about the condition, but I feel much more positive now. This is a wonderful product which is worth its weight in gold to me.”

C.Mc, 35, Blackpool, UK

References

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2. NHS Direct Wales: [www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk/encyclopaedia/e/article/eczema\(atopic\)](http://www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk/encyclopaedia/e/article/eczema(atopic)) [Last accessed 26 February 2015]
3. NHS Direct Wales: www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk/encyclopaedia/c/article/contactdermatitis/ [Last accessed 26 February 2015]
4. NHS Choices: www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Corticosteroid-preparations-%28topical%29/Pages/dosage.aspx [Last accessed 26 February 2015]
5. Open label Multi Center Clinical Observation Study Into the overall efficacy of Atopifin® Cream for Babies, Toddlers and Young children with Atopic Dermatitis, Dr. J. Buzasi e.a, 2009