Eczema Management Dr Fayyaz Chaudhri

Overview

Skin becomes inflamed, itchy and dry. With scratching, infection and inflammation are introduced which make the eczema worse - a vicious 'ITCH-SCRATCH' cycle. **There are 4 components to effective treatment.**

Step 1 - Repair the Skin Barrier **Reduce Dryness.**

- Use a soap substitute (any moisturiser will do)
- Use a moisturiser at least twice a day
- Stop the use of soaps and shower gels (because they contain detergents which alter the pH of skin to further damage the skin barrier)

Step 2 - Treat Inflammation **Steroid or steroid alternative.**

USE STEROID OINTMENT (greasy for dry skin) or STEROID CREAM (for the face). A 'finger tip' should cover an area the size of your hand. Steroid needs applied only ONCE daily - moisturise at a different time of day to reduce dilution of steroid.

PROLONGED DAILY STEROID USE CAN THIN THE SKIN.

USE A STRONG STEROID ONCE DAILY TO BRING UNDER CONTROL OVER 2-3 WEEKS.

THEN USE A STEP DOWN APPROACH:

STEP DOWN TO ALTERNATE DAYS OR USE A LESS STRONG STEROID

ONCE UNDER CONTROL, A STEROID CAN BE USED ON TWO CONSECUTIVE DAYS PER WEEK TO KEEP ECZEMA AWAY

MAY NEED A STEROID CREAM 1-2 DAYS PER WEEK AS MAINTENANCE

Know the different steroid strengths

x 60 VERY STRONG
NOT FOR CHILDREN or Face*
DERMOVATE(*clobeta***sol***)*, Nerisone forte

x10 STRONG
BETNOVATE (betametasone), synalar, locoid, ELOCON(mometasone)

x3 MODERATE
eumovate(*clobeta***sone**), modrasone, betnovate RD, Haelan

x1 WEAK
HYDROCORTISONE

USE MOISTURISERS ALL THE TIME EVEN WHEN UNDER CONTROL

*** For the face, a steroid alternative (ELIDEL OR PROTOPIC) can be used. These do not thin the skin but can sting if skin is inflamed. They can be started when skin has settled down with steroid for 2-3 days.**

Step 3 - Treat infection **The aim is to reduce staphlycoccus infection which drives eczema.**

- Use oral antibiotics for 10-14 days (flucloxacillin or clarithromycin)
- A capful of Milton solution (like chlorine in a swimming pool) in the bath helps reduce skin infection.
- Sometimes a nasal antibacterial should be used such as Naseptim, Mupirocim or Promtoderm.
- If skin is infected all over, consider MILTON baths – see Guys and St Thomas Hospital Formula to add Milton solution to a bath.

Herpes Simplex (coldsores) can result in **Eczema Herpeticum** (a very severe form of eczema) and may need to be treated with oral aciclovir.

Step 4 - Habit Reversal **Break the itch- scratch cycle.**

- Laundry:
  - Use NON-BIOLOGICAL WASHING POWDER
  - USE SMALLER QUANTITY
  - If you can, double rinse to remove detergent residue
- REDUCE HOUSEDUST MITE
  - Remove cuddly toys
  - Wash blankets
- STOP FRAGRANCE USE AROUND THE HOUSE
  - Avoid plug ins, air freshener sprays etc

Useful Resources

National Eczema Association

www.pcds.org.uk

short videos on steroids and moisturisers

eczema.org

dermnetnz Dermatitis

Dermal Managing eczema