

Dermatologist explains atopic dermatitis triggers and treatment

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Atopic dermatitis, the most common form of eczema, is a widespread

skin condition known for causing dry, itchy and inflamed skin. It affects 15% to 20% of children and 8% to 10% of adults. The discomfort it brings can disrupt a person's everyday life if not treated.

Dr. Dawn Davis, a [dermatologist](#) at Mayo Clinic and co-chair of the American Academy of Dermatology Atopic Dermatitis Guidelines Committee, is an author of the newly released and updated guidelines for managing [atopic dermatitis](#).

She says understanding potential triggers for atopic dermatitis is a start.

Triggers for atopic dermatitis or eczema can be internal and external. "Any sort of stressor to the mind, to the nerves, to the skin or to the [immune system](#) can cause a flare of eczema," says Dr. Davis.

It could be [daily stress](#), a food allergy or the jewelry you are wearing. "Some people with eczema are sensitive to nickel, they may be sensitive to a preservative and a medication that they're using," she says.

Learning how to decrease your sensitivity or stress can help.

Dr. Davis encourages patients to:

- Practice [mind](#)-body exercises.
- Get plenty of rest.
- Stay hydrated.
- Avoid smoking.
- Practice a sensitive skincare routine.

This includes daily baths or showers with mild soaps, and frequent moisturizing with a fragrance-free, dye-free and chemical-free lotion.

"They may need may need prescription medicines. Those can be

available topically by a cream or an ointment or systemically by a pill or a shot. And then we may choose to do advanced therapy beyond that, such as patch testing," Dr. Davis says.

Provided by Mayo Clinic

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