

EZYHEALTH

SEPTEMBER 2014

www.ezyhealth.com



Urologist and Robotic Surgeon Dr James Tan explores innovative surgery

Vitamins Guide Vitamin K



Must Read!

Listen to your HEART

MYTH BUSTERS: Let's talk about SEX!

New Feature

Ask the Expert:

SEXUAL HEALTH

Health Issues

ECZEMA

The most common chronic skin condition

HPV AND CERVICAL CANCER

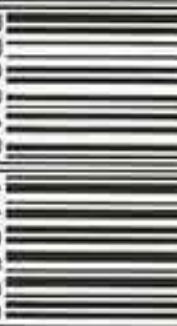
Brain Attack

Elizabeth Laxan
Getting ready to get hitched

Like us for the latest promotions!

S\$ 3.80
ISSN 20104421

9 772010 442002



Eczema

by Dr Lynn Chiam

The most common chronic skin condition



ECZEMA, ALSO KNOWN as atopic dermatitis, is an inflammatory skin condition characterised by a red rash, dry skin and itching. In certain patients, there are also signs of thickened skin (lichenification), blisters, hypopigmentation or hyperpigmentation and skin infections. Eczema is a common skin condition, affecting about 10% of adults and up to 20% of children worldwide. There has been an increase in the prevalence of eczema in children, especially in developed countries, with Singapore having one of the highest rates of eczema in Asia. Eczema can adversely affect one's quality of life if it is not well controlled.

Causes of Eczema

Many factors are involved in eczema. There is a strong association with genetics, as it is more likely for a child to have eczema if one or both of his parents suffer from it. In patients with eczema, it is not uncommon to have family members with allergic rhinitis and asthma. People with eczema have a defective skin barrier, whereby the skin is more prone to firstly, the penetration of irritants and allergens and secondly, loss of skin moisture.

Apart from genes, the surrounding environment also plays an important role.

1. Environmental irritants and allergens

The most common allergen in Singapore is the house dust mite. House dust mites thrive in the indoor environment provided by homes, specifically in bedrooms and kitchens. Other common environmental triggers for eczema include heat, humidity and sweat. Irritants such as prolonged contact with harsh soaps, detergents and water can also trigger a flare-up of eczema.

2. Endogenous factors

Internal factors such as stress, fever, hormonal changes or lack of sleep can also trigger eczema flare-ups. For instance, many teenagers report flare-ups during examination periods. Teenagers undergoing puberty and pregnant women may also experience worsening of pre-existing eczema.