

American Academy of Pediatrics

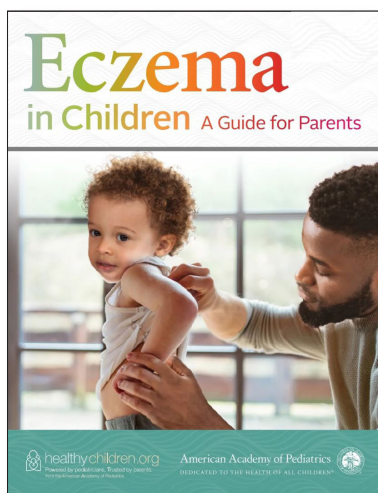
DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®



Eczema in Children: A Guide for Parents

Digital Health Media Publications: Booklet/Brochure

This is a digital patient education magazine with articles focusing on understanding eczema and proper treatment, as well as videos and interactive forms. Included as part of an eczema resource for clinicians on aap.org. *Sponsored by Sanofi Genzyme and Regeneron.*



Welcome From the American Academy of Pediatrics

If you have a child with eczema, it's important that you know how to manage your child's dry, red, and itchy skin. Because eczema can be hard to control, the American Academy of Pediatrics has developed this publication to help parents and caregivers of children with eczema. It answers many of the most common questions about eczema.

In addition to your child's primary care doctor, a specialist such as a pediatric dermatologist or pediatric allergist may be part of the team caring for your child. In this publication, "child's doctor" may refer to your child's primary care doctor or specialist.

Symptoms and Diagnosis

What are symptoms of eczema?
Symptoms of eczema are different for each child. They can range from red, itchy rashes to severe and cause itchy skin (especially at night), discomfort because of itchy skin, and difficulty sleeping. Older children also may have difficulty concentrating.

Common symptoms include:

- Rash (red or inflamed, itchy skin)
- Dry, cracked, or scaly skin
- Oozing, weeping blisters, or pus-filled blisters (especially when there is a secondary infection)

Your child may also develop white spots on the skin caused by the inflammation. The white spots are more noticeable on darker skin. If your child has lighter skin, you might notice the white spots after your child has been exposed to the sun. The white spots are not permanent, but they may take many months to go away.

Where do eczema rashes appear?
Eczema is one of the most common causes of itchy rashes in children. The rash may appear red on lighter skin or brown, purple, or gray on darker skin. See Figures 1 and 2. It often targets certain areas of the body based on age. See Areas Where Eczema Rashes Often Develop.

The rash also may come and go. It can worsen at times (called exacerbations or flares) and then get better (called remissions).

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Areas Where Eczema Rashes Often Develop*

Infants and Young Adults: In infants, a rash often appears on the face (cheeks, forehead), and around the mouth and nose. A rash also may appear on outer surfaces of the arms, legs, and hands (feet). Sometimes the rash may appear on the neck and feet. Eczema usually does not develop on the diaper area.

Older Children: In older children, a rash often appears around the eyes, on the neck, in the neck (armpits) of the elbows, on the wrists, across the back of the torso and palms.

Terms and Young Adults: In teens and young adults, a rash often appears on the hands and feet. It also can appear on the neck, in the neck (armpits) of the elbows, back of the torso, wrists, and hands, and around the eyes.

*This is not meant to be used as a guide for the exact location where flare-ups or flares of eczema appear on the body.

How is eczema diagnosed?
Your child's doctor will need to examine your child and ask you some questions about your child's health before a diagnosis can be made. Your child's doctor will want to rule out any other conditions that may have similar symptoms.

In general, no special tests are needed. This includes food allergy testing, although certain allergy triggers may make eczema symptoms worse. They do not cause eczema. Food allergy is a true trigger for eczema symptoms in some, and it is usually limited to young children with severe eczema that does not respond to standard treatments.

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