



# HEALTH with Dr. A. Kumar

Eczema, also known as atopic dermatitis, is a non-contagious inflammation of the skin and can appear on any part of the body. The initial symptoms may include redness, itching, and the outbreak of lesions that may discharge serous matter and could become encrusted and / or scaly. The skin may become so sensitive from scratching the area that it could become raw. Even a loss of eyelids or eyebrows may also occur in some cases.

Blepharitis is also a common eye condition which can affect the outer eyelid, as well as the eyeball. It may include inflammation or swelling of the eye, eye drainage, itching, burning and dry skin around the eye. The skin may tear around the eye upon scratching. Crusting and debris in the eyelashes also possible. A bacterial infection causes blepharitis and is treated by applying a warm compress and use of a topical antibiotic ointment. There is another serious eye condition known as Perioral dermatitis which can spread to other areas of the face such as around nose and mouth. This condition seems to be more prominent in adult women as per studies. The symptoms of perioral dermatitis are almost as of eczema of the eye i.e. patches of red, itchy dry skin around the eyes, mouth or nose accompanied by small bumps. Though the exact cause of perioral dermatitis is still not understood, yet it is believed to be associated with poor hygiene, topical steroid creams or ointments or certain face creams. Though eczema on many other parts of the body remain hidden under the clothes but unfortunately eye eczema is virtually impossible to hide unless wear sunglasses constantly. Not only this, because of the very thin skin around the eyes or the eyelid, it can be one of the more difficult types of eczema to deal with. This is why patients need to be careful in choosing the right kind of treatment.

Eyelid eczema is most often the result of direct contact with an allergen. This means that the most effective way to treat this condition is to remove the allergen:

- Often the allergen is a makeup, face cream, or cleanser used regularly.
- Nail varnish and touching the eyes with artificial nails on is often a trigger.
- Problems with makeup and nail products can be especially present if the brand has recently changed their ingredients.
- A common form of eczema on eyelids is called rosacea and can be caused by spicy foods, sudden temperature changes or alcohol.

**Treatment :** Prevention and treatment of eczema involves uncovering and avoiding triggers, hydrating the skin and using topical or oral steroids to control inflammation and ease symptoms. Apply cool compresses to the affected eye area to soothe discomfort and itching and to reduce swelling. Dampen

a small towel with cool water and apply it to the eyes for 15 to 20 minutes as needed.

- Avoid long, hot showers and harsh soaps. Air-dry the skin, and apply a water-based moisturizing lotion immediately after showering. While oil-based ointments are often the most effective against eczema, these moisturizers may clog pores and contribute to acne. Ensure that the products do not contain preservatives or fragrances. Avoid contact with the inside of the eye.
- Visit the dermatologist for a stronger topical medication or for a course of oral steroids in case usual over the counter treatments do not respond. Oral medications, may cause significant side effects and should therefore only be used under the GP guidance. Take an antihistamine medication to relieve the itching. Antihistamines may cause

## ECZEMA OF THE EYE



## & OTHER SUCH CONDITIONS

drowsiness and are best taken soon before bed.

- Use a prescription immunomodulator medication to control the eczema symptoms. These drugs may be beneficial at relieving acute symptoms when other treatment options have failed. But their prolonged use may effect the immune system.
- Undergo allergy testing to uncover any allergic triggers for the condition. Environmental and food allergies may contribute to eczema around the eyes. There are a number of natural eczema treatments that can be used to reduce inflammation on the skin around the eyes, for example:
- Aloe Vera is a natural plant which has skin healing properties and can reduce irritation

If you have any health issues or stories, please email us at: [drkumar@theasianworld.co.uk](mailto:drkumar@theasianworld.co.uk)

fairly quickly. The creams and ointments containing this plant extract are available easily.

- Vitamin E creams may also be quite beneficial.
- Allergens can be triggers for eczema. Use cotton bed sheets, pillow and blanket covers etc. Cotton causes far less irritation to the skin.
- Try to wear some cotton mittens while sleeping. It will reduce the irritation when you scratch during the night.
- Stress is another biggest cause to worsen the problems. No stress formula is the best. There is a huge link between eczema and stress, and stress is a major contributor to any type of eczema.
- Regardless of how difficult it can be hard to resist to scratch at the eczema skin, you must

avoid this temptation as much as possible because scratching the itchy dry skin around the eyes will result in the symptoms becoming progressively worse.

• Diet is very important. It certainly influences the eczema condition. Try to incorporate more fresh and organic food in the diet. This helps the immune system to become stronger which places the body in a better position to fight off an eczema skin condition.

As usual, my philosophy about any disease is simple: drink plenty of water, keep hygiene, have very good breakfast, lunch and dinner. Never forget, we should try to eat the healthy and balanced diet and totally shun all the canned and processed foods, especially meat. Add a lot of fresh fruit and green vegetables in the diet. Take some fruit or salad along with you at your place of work and replace fizzy drinks, tea and coffee with fresh water or juice? There is no use earning good money, wearing expansive clothes or maintaining the BMWs and Mercs if you remain sick and diseased.

The face is a very sensitive area and the skin around the eyes is really very delicate. Even the mildest steroids can cause secondary reactions in the area, sometimes leading to increased rosacea spreading to the cheeks. This is why it is important to look to

natural methods to safely treat your case of eczema eyelids. Eye Eczema do not just stop at the symptoms of eczema, it can also have an effect on the way you see yourself. Without putting too finer point on it, eczema around the eyes can be seen by everyone.

For a free advice on any medical condition, you may contact Dr. A. Kumar through The Asian World.

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## NEW DRUG TO TREAT CHILDHOOD LEUKAEMIA

Cancer Research UK has opened the first trial of a new type of drug to treat children aged from six months to 18 years with acute leukaemia, who are no longer responding to treatment.

In this first-in-child study, 15 children with acute lymphoblastic leukaemia (ALL) and acute myeloid leukaemia (AML) will receive a treatment called AT9283. AT9283 belongs to a new class of drugs called aurora kinase inhibitors.

The trial is led by Great North Children's Hospital, Newcastle upon Tyne and is also running at four other clinical centres.

Despite great progress in the treatment of childhood leukaemia, approximately 100 children with leukaemia under the age of 15 die each year in the UK. Leukaemia that has returned or is resistant to current treatments remains one of the key causes of death from childhood cancer. Cancer is the second most common cause of death in childhood.

## BEST IMAGING TECHNIQUE FOR OVARIAN CANCER

Cancer scientists have determined that a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) technique, which measures the movement of water molecules within the tumour, may be the best way to monitor how women with late-stage ovarian cancer are responding to treatment.

Researchers compared three different MRI techniques and showed that a type called 'diffusion-weighted MRI' is the most effective at indicating response to treatment and also at distinguishing when tumours that had spread from the ovaries into surrounding tissues were not responding.

CT scans are routinely used to help assess whether ovarian cancer patients should continue having chemotherapy after their first round of treatment, but can only detect differences in the size of the tumour as opposed to a change in its structure.

Study leader Dr Evis Sala, said: "We've shown that diffusion-weighted MRI can give a much better idea of the density of tumours."

## 157K KIDS START SMOKING EVERY YEAR

Every year around 157,000 children aged 11-15 start smoking – that's enough to fill 5,200 classrooms or make up nearly 14,000 junior football teams.

These shocking figures highlight the ongoing scale of the tobacco problem, and underline the importance of sustained action to discourage young people from starting to smoke, including by introducing plain packaging for all tobacco products as soon as possible.

And almost one million children – those aged 15 and under – in the UK have tried smoking at least once – around 27 per cent of children. Preventing young people from being tempted to try smoking is vital as eight out of ten adult smokers start before they turn 19.

Children who smoke just one cigarette by the age of 11 are around twice as likely to take up smoking over the next few years than those who do not experiment with smoking.

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