



MAN'S GUIDE TO

ECZEMA HEALING



*"I achieved lasting relief from eczema and I want to get the message out.
Check out my easy-to understand and effective method"*

Start your eczema healing now!

ECZEMAHEALINGGUIDE.COM

ISBN 978-87-972902-0-0

DISCLAIMER

I'm not a doctor and have no professional health-related education. This guide is simply based on my own experience healing Atopic Dermatitis.

You should always see your doctor if your eczema worsens and is hard to keep in check.

"A special thanks to Søren Dalsgaard for review and corrections"

Published 2021-01

CONTENTS

Introduction 5

Eczema 5

Turning point 6

Strategies and mindset 8

What is eczema? 8

Strategy 8

Habit stacking 9

Gamification 10

Eczema triggers 12

Milk, dairy and eggs 12

Goodbye throat inflammation 14

Eggs 15

Substitutes 15

Sugar 16

Processed foods and traces of allergens 18

The Eczema Detective 19

Protect your skin 20

The sun 21

Diet 23

Inflammation 23

Western lifestyle 24

<i>Gut bacteria - The workhorse of your digestive system</i>	<i>25</i>
--	-----------

<i>Free radicals - The bad guys</i>	<i>27</i>
-------------------------------------	-----------

<i>Antioxidants - The good guys</i>	<i>28</i>
-------------------------------------	-----------

<i>Wholegrain</i>	<i>29</i>
-------------------	-----------

<i>Balance is key</i>	<i>31</i>
-----------------------	-----------

<i>Shopping list</i>	<i>32</i>
----------------------	-----------

Skincare	33
-----------------	-----------

<i>Your bath</i>	<i>33</i>
------------------	-----------

<i>The active eczema bath</i>	<i>35</i>
-------------------------------	-----------

<i>Your normal bath</i>	<i>37</i>
-------------------------	-----------

<i>Cold showers</i>	<i>38</i>
---------------------	-----------

<i>Creams</i>	<i>39</i>
---------------	-----------

<i>CeraVe</i>	<i>40</i>
---------------	-----------

<i>Ceramides</i>	<i>42</i>
------------------	-----------

Introduction

Hi, my name is Poul and I'm from Denmark. I am married with two young children. I make my living in IT at a large employer in Denmark.

My mind loves to tackle challenges and find solutions to complex problems. Through my education and experience I have learned to use logical thinking combined with research to deal with all sorts of IT issues. That approach has helped me find a lasting and effective cure for another problem, regarding my own health.

Eczema

For as long as I can remember eczema has accompanied me through my life. My specific condition is known as Atopic Dermatitis, which is Latin for “inflamed skin”.

In my late thirties I suffered a massive flareup and decided that I wanted to get rid of eczema no matter the cost. I was tired of just masking my symptoms with topical steroids, I felt there had be a better way. I was disappointed with the medical professionals I knew since their only solution was to prescribe evermore stronger steroid creams. It seemed to me that they did not understand the underlying

mechanisms that cause eczema and so they focused on steroid creams. Who can blame them? After all, they hadn't themselves felt the intense itch under the skin and the exhaustion felt by a body under attack.

Turning point

That's when I began to research eczema-healing in a more focused way. I was shocked to find almost no information online about natural eczema healing. Bits of information were scattered in blogs, websites, and medical studies, but no-where was the whole story to be found.

I started to understand that rather than just focusing on one method, such as using a particular lotion, the cure seemed to demand a wider, more holistic approach to the problem. It involved turning my previous life and routines completely upside-down, so that every aspect of my daily schedule would now support my overall strategy: to keep the body healthy and avoid provoking eczema flareups.

I have now refined my knowledge and daily routines to the extent that eczema is no longer a problem for me. Of course this knowledge is of great interest to others with eczema. That's why I have decided to get the message across to as many people as possible by making this book.

It is meant to be compact and laser-focused on the core of the problem. My goal is to show eczema sufferers that you can overcome your eczema condition in a natural and effective way. In the process you will become a healthier, stronger and more energized version of yourselves. Your weapons in this fight are

- 1) The knowledge that I will provide and
- 2) Your will to put an end to your eczema NOW!

Strategies and mindset

In this chapter we investigate what eczema is and how to deal with it in daily life.

What is eczema?

Eczema is basically the result of a defective skin barrier and an exaggerated immune system response to what the body views as an attack on its integrity.

Such an immune system response can be triggered in two main ways. Allergens in touch with the skin can penetrate it and activate an immune response. Or you can eat something your body is allergic to. Either way the result is what is generally known as an eczema flare-up.

Strategy

I have always had a holistic approach to my skin problems. Eczema flare-ups are often the result of many different factors gone wrong which is why you need to think of your body as a complex and interdependent biological system.

It can be hard to make the choices that you know are right for you, but the consequences of complacency can be eczema flare-ups. A proven technique, used by SEAL soldiers trying to make it through basic training, is to think only one meal ahead. Their mantra is "just make it to the next meal" and not to think any further. If you manage to do that at any moment then the future will take care of itself and you can stay eczema-free.

Habit stacking

This strategy is an effective way to add new, beneficial habits to your daily routine. The idea is to add a new action to an already existing habit, which will make it much easier to remember.

If, for example, you want to eat more fruit, simply put the fruits next to your jug of coffee. In the morning when it is time for coffee, you will see the fruit and grab an apple while the coffee is brewing.

Another example. You want to do some light exercise before going to bed, but you keep forgetting to do it. Try placing your pajamas on top of your dumbbells. When it is bedtime you will see the dumbbells and remember exercising.

Setting specific alarms on your smartphone can also be a great tool for remembering new positive actions that you want to become an ingrained habit at specific times of the day. If you want to remember applying specific creams during the day, simply set an alarm.

This technique makes it easier to push through positive change in your daily life in a way that is not mentally demanding. Just set the “trigger” and after a while you have re-wired your brain and created the neurological connections that constitute a new habit.

Consistency is the key to lasting change. By building good habits positive progress comes by itself. The way out of oscillating between periods of good and bad habits, eczema-wise, is to create a consistent, healthy lifestyle focused on eczema healing.

Gamification

One of the most helpful ways to maintain motivation when starting something new, is to think about it as a game. You can do this with your eczema-healing and the healthy lifestyle that is the foundation of positive progress. In your mind choosing to eat a piece of fruit adds to your daily

score, whereas grabbing for a bag of candy negatively affects your internal score-board.

When your body is troubled by eczema it is very important that most of your food and routine choices add points rather than subtracting them. People not suffering from eczema can get away with just keeping the score neutral at the end of the day. You, however, need a surplus of positive points to keep your eczema at bay and to start a healing process that works in your favor.

Eczema triggers

People with atopic dermatitis, better known as eczema, often believe that certain types of food cause eczema to flare up. According to medical researchers up to 30% of AD-patients are indeed allergic to one or more types of food.¹

To complicate matters further some food that seem to have an allergic-like effect, don't show up on allergy tests. I have experienced this myself with milk. My allergy test came out negative, yet my body always reacted to milk with a massive flareup.

Milk, dairy and eggs

The first breakthrough in my eczema healing journey came when I read about a guy who achieved great results by removing milk protein from his diet. My eczema at the time was horrible and I was desperate to get better. What I read made me curious. Could it really be so simple? I had to give it a go immediately and hope for the best.

A week after ditching dairy products my eczema had subsided substantially. My wife wanted to perform an experiment on me to see if the results were real or

somehow imagined. Being an engineer she wanted to find out how I really reacted to milk and went on to turn me into her guinea pig, investigating my reactions to milk and dairy. She used the Eczema Detective Technique which I will describe a bit further down.

The results were crystal clear. Every time I avoided dairy products for a period my eczema disappeared. Just as clearly, my eczema flared up again when dairy products were reintroduced.

Since dairy products are one of the most common triggers of eczema, my first recommendation to you is to try and leave it out of your diet. Allergic reactions are often caused by the proteins in milk and dairy that trigger an itchy, reddish bubbly eczema flare-ups.

People that are intolerant to lactose (a sugar compound) often have upset stomachs and feel bloated. Those symptoms should not be confused with eczema, even though you may experience both symptoms from the milk and dairy products in your diet.

Dairy is found in surprisingly many elements of a typical, Western diet. Of course it is in butter, cream, cheese, and

yoghurt based on dairy milk, but processed foods also very often contain dairy-based proteins as an ingredient. In accordance with international rules and regulations a number of countries have decided to label such ingredients as priority allergens². As a matter of fact, milk protein is the most widely labeled allergen since it causes allergic reactions in many people with food allergy.

There are many opinions on milk and whether it is ultimately healthy or harmful. Everybody must make up his or her own opinion on milk. But for men in particular, it is important to know that milk and dairy products increase the risk of prostate cancer³. If that is not sufficiently bad news, dairy is also associated with an increased risk of lung cancer, breast cancer, and ovarian cancer among people with lactose intolerance ⁴.

Goodbye throat inflammation

When I drank milk regularly, every winter brought on a sore throat. It was a regular, recurring phenomenon and everybody knows how painful a sore throat can be. Imagine my relief when it went away during my first dairy-free winter. Even better, I haven't ever had it since. Putting an end to sore throats was a much-welcomed bonus and in itself was enough reason to get rid of milk.

You may think milk and dairy are indispensable ingredients of a healthy diet, but the only people who absolutely need milk are actually infants and small babies

Eggs

The proteins contained in eggs rank highly on the food sensitivity list of many people. I also react to eggs, but my reaction is more creeping than a sudden flare-up. It develops over several days and slowly retreats again when topical steroids are applied to the inflamed skin.

Egg-proteins are common ingredients in many types of food such as mayonnaise, relish, as well as food items such as pies and pastries.

Substitutes

Look for VEGAN-labeled foods since they don't contain dairy and eggs. These days there is a wide variety of vegan foods which furthermore often constitute an excellent alternative to dairy and eggs from a nutritional point of view. Taste-wise they don't let down either. Vegan alternatives are often delicious and have the added bonus of longer shelf life.

Oat milk, perfect in coffee and with morning cereals.

Vegan butter, a great and healthy alternative to butter.

Vegan cheese, very tasty and you won't tell the difference in a burger or toast.

Vegan Yogurt, based on soy-beans and tastes just as good as normal yogurt.

Vegan Mayonnaise

Coconut-milk, good for cooking as a replacement for cream.

Sugar

In an anti-inflammatory diet, sugar is a major factor. The consumption of sugar affects blood sugar levels and pancreas insulin production. When a lot of sugar is ingested the body constantly forced to regulate the natural blood sugar content by adjusting the production of insulin. This ongoing regulation is hard on the body and destabilizes it badly.

One of the biggest present-day health problems is obesity and inflammation-related illnesses⁵. Excess sugar in our food is a major culprit⁶. On average, U.S. adults consume

about 3 times as much sugar as recommended by the American Heart Association.

Recent research shows that sugar additionally has a direct, destructive and inflammatory effect on the body's cells⁷. Since eczema is often the result of inflammation, it is a good idea to reduce your sugar intake as much as possible.

I feel much more balanced when I diminish the sugar in my diet. That does not mean that restrict myself to foodstuffs meant for diabetics. Rather, I look for food that only contains natural sugar. It is the added sugar you have to look out for: an ingredient often used because it is cheap to produce and because the brain loves sugary food and therefore makes you crave it. Perfectly sensible if you lived a life of scarcity 5.000 years ago, but obviously you don't.

When you start eliminating sugar from your diet you will feel the difference immediately. After the first couple of difficult weeks with withdrawal symptoms, you will feel on your skin and body that you are more in balance and that your energy level no longer goes through wild fluctuations. I believe sugar in itself is not the cause of flare-ups, but it aggravates them and makes them harder to control. Sugar seems to be

an eczema-booster that keeps the body and skin out of balance and intensifies eczema flare-ups.

Your body and mind will quickly adjust to reduced levels of added sugar. It is just like turning the volume down on the stereo: your ears will adjust to the new lower volume by being more sensitive to the sounds. Try it out and I'm sure you will find it relatively easy to settle on a much lower intake of sugar in your daily life.

As an added bonus, reducing sugar may well lower your dental costs, so you might even save some money on that account too.

Processed foods and traces of allergens

The food you buy in the supermarket is often processed in one way or another. Processed products contain many different ingredients and chemicals to bind them all together. Some of these are preservatives with inflammatory properties as discussed in the chapter about Diet.

In the factories where these foods are manufactured more than one type of food often goes through the machinery.

This can lead to contamination, from previous production cycles, with traces of extraneous ingredients. For this reason almost all processed food is labelled with a list of so-called “trace ingredients” that people may be allergic to.

The Eczema Detective

Eczema sufferers can be sensitive to various kinds of food that generally pose no problem to ordinary people. Some of the major triggers for eczema-patients we have already talked about.

On top of the major triggers there may be other foods and skincare-products towards which your body has become sensitive. You need to find these hidden triggers if you want to maximize the healing of your body.

During an eczema flareup you often have a nagging feeling as to the cause. Rather than just going on feelings, however, you need to do a mental backtrack and look for possible triggers of your flare-up. You must become what I like to call an Eczema Detective.

The method is simple. When the flareup has died away, you need to try out the suspected food and be very alert to any

sensations both internal and external. You may want to take photos of your usual eczema spots during the testing period. In that way you will have a digital visual diary and will more easily be able to conclude whether the suspected food actually influences your eczema.

Protect your skin

Daily tasks like hand washing the dishes or cleaning the bathroom can trigger eczema. Since your skin barrier as an eczema sufferer is compromised you cannot allow any chemicals to get in contact with the skin. This part of skin-care is often overlooked and can lead to frustrating flare-ups that appear to come out of the blue for no apparent reason.

After I started wearing long-sleeved shirts more often many seemingly unprovoked flareups on my arms have disappeared. I prefer to wear shirts or sweaters with a front zipper which makes it easy to regulate your body temperature during the day. In that way the skin stays at an optimum temperature, again a measure to prevent unwanted irritation that may provoke a flareup.

Besides a long-sleeved shirt, I always wear thin rubber gloves when doing the dishes or handle chemicals such as

lubricants for cars and bicycles. In combination, my shirt and gloves also keep my skin protected when I clean the bathroom or otherwise employ chemical cleaning products.

My preferred gloves are blue, thin nitrile gloves without latex that can be reused many times. After use, just wash the gloves with soap while you wear them, and then put them aside.

The sun

Even a walk in the garden in the sun can cause an eczema flare-up. This phenomenon is called sun eczema and is a photochemical reaction in your skin to the ultraviolet rays of the sun.

You are often very sensitive to sunlight in the early summer months following a long winter. Usually a rash develops within a few hours, but sometimes a flare-up only occurs 1-2 days after exposure. Most often, the skin turns red and is covered with small buds and blisters often accompanied by itching.

For most people the symptoms subside within 4-7 days, but for that to happen they must avoid further direct sun exposure of the affected skin. The rash only occurs on

exposed skin not protected by sunscreen, most often arms, chest and exposed skin above the shirt collar.

The face, however, is only rarely affected. That is probably due to the skin on the face being exposed to sun and light throughout the year.

Diet

This chapter will get you up to speed on how your diet and digestion play a major role in eczema-healing. They are both huge topics in themselves, but I will focus on what you need to know to fight eczema effectively.

Inflammation

All diseases that end on -itis are caused by an inflammatory condition in the body. This also applies to Atopic Dermatitis, better known as eczema.

It is essential that you as an eczema patient adhere to an anti-inflammatory diet and avoid the types of food that cause eczema flare-ups.

Inflammation is the natural response of the body's defense system also known as the immune system. When the body suffers damage, such as a cut, or gets sick with a virus or bacterial infection, the immune system goes into action.

The reactions to the damage are redness, swelling and/or pain at the location of the injury or illness. These symptoms

help and boost the healing process and are referred to as inflammation. When the repair job is done the immune system goes back to its dormant state, until next time it is called on to repair an injury or heal an illness.

Western lifestyle

The Western lifestyle is composed of many factors that can cause eczema though they pose no direct threat to the body. These produce what doctors refer to as chronic inflammation: an ongoing state that is present all the time. Chronic inflammation is one of the biggest health issues facing modern human beings because although inflammation is an effective tool for fixing the body, when it becomes a constant state it will damage the cells of the body. Cancers, eczema, and arthritis are some of the illnesses primarily caused by chronic inflammation.

The site of most inflammations and 70% of our immune system is in your gut⁸. That makes it immensely important to keep your digestive system in good shape. A diet that combines vegetables, fruit, fish, whole-grain bread, and pasta is very important for avoiding an inflamed gut. On top of that you should always choose the food that is processed as little as possible and food primarily of ecological origin.

If your digestion is compromised, your body will also have a hard time producing neurotransmitters, like serotonin. They are the chemicals that the brain uses for cell-to-cell communication. Up to 95% of serotonin is produced in the small intestine and low levels of serotonin contribute to anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues.

So, if you experience brain fog, sadness and low energy you may want to look for the reason in your diet.

Gut bacteria - The workhorse of your digestive system

The human digestive system is composed of billions of bacteria that help break down the food we eat. They outnumber the body's cells by 1 to 10⁹.

There are hundreds of different kinds of bacteria and in recent decades, scientists have discovered that the number and type of bacteria can have a profound impact on your health.

It is essential that the good bacteria are in the majority and that you feed them healthy food. That enables them to play a key role in keeping your body and immune system in top-notch condition.

To boost your bacterial flora you can eat or drink probiotics, either as a supplement or in its natural form. I always prefer natural foods and this is where fermented foods play an important role. Fermented foods can be kimchi, pickled vegetables, and sauerkraut.

One example is kombucha, a fermented tea drink made from a particular fermentation process called SCOBY (symbiotic cultures of bacteria and yeasts). The drink is very delicious and tastes like a carbonated soft drink with a more fruity and less sugary flavor. There are many different flavors of kombucha and if you are daring enough you can even make it yourself. Easier and more convenient, though, is to buy it online or in the local supermarket.

Free radicals - The bad guys

Free radicals are compounds that can have devastating effects on your body. The phenomenon is called oxidative stress and occurs when an oxygen molecule splits into single atoms with unpaired electrons.

Since electrons like to be in pairs the unpaired electron travels around the body in search of another electron to pair itself with. When that happens it causes damage to the cells, proteins, and DNA¹⁰.

Free radicals are both a cause of inflammation and a result of inflammation. Damage from free radicals causes inflammation and such chronic inflammation goes on to produce more free radicals which in turn create more inflammation. This is a vicious cycle that can damage many systems in the body.

Free radicals are found in the food we eat, in the air as airborne pollution and can be generated in our skin when it is exposed to sunlight.

These bad guys are primarily found in:

- Foods with a high content of refined carbohydrates and sugars
- Processed foods like sausages, bacon, and salami
- Preservatives in processed foods
- Beverages containing alcohol
- Meat that has been cooked at high temperatures
- Tobacco products and e-cigarettes

Antioxidants - The good guys

If the free radicals are the bad guys then it is welcome news that good guys are also part of the game. These are called antioxidants and can help stopping or limiting the damage done by the free radicals. It is a bit of a battle between good and evil, though of course more complex than that. There are countless interactions between various elements in your diet and the task of the antioxidants basically is to keep the free radicals in check. Your mission is to provide the right conditions for the battle to be won by taking an active choice every time you put food on your plate.

Common antioxidants are vitamin A, vitamin C, vitamin E, beta-carotene, lycopene, lutein, and selenium. These are all present in a healthy, balanced diet consisting of fruits,

vegetables, different vegetable-based oils, wholegrain, nuts, fish, poultry, and meat.



TAKE ACTION:

Have a glass of fruit juice!

Grab a couple of carrots!

Make yourself a fruit-smoothie!

Wholegrain

When bread or pasta are produced they are made from grain that has been ground into flour. Wheat flour can be wholegrain or refined grains. Refined flour is made from the nutrient-poor, white core of the individual grains. All other parts of the grain has been removed during the production process and that is a shame since most of the healthy parts of the grain are discarded in that process.

Wholegrain is flour and other products that contain all parts of the grain. It is rich in dietary fiber, iron, proteins, vitamin B, and the antioxidant vitamin E.

Examples of other kinds of wholegrain foodstuffs are bulgur, oats, brown rice, buckwheat, corn and quinoa.

The Danish National Food Authority recommends that Danes consume at least 75 g of wholegrain daily to gain health benefits ¹¹. Similar recommendations are most likely found in your own national guidelines.



TAKE ACTION:

Buy products that is fully or partially made from whole grain!

Bake your own bread: it is quite easy and usually tastes much better than supermarket bread!

Balance is key

To keep your body in top shape you must supply the right nutrients in the right amounts. Some foods like fish are recommended three to four times a week, whereas fruit and vegetables are recommended daily. By slightly changing your daily diet during the course of every week, you can have all the nutrients you need and make sure to avoid nutritional deficiencies.

The way we absorb nutrients from food is dependent on the food mix in our digestive tract at any particular time. As an example, it is important to get both vitamin D and magnesium as well as calcium to build up your bone mass. If just one of these is missing the process will be less efficient and the nutrients are excreted instead of being absorbed by the body.



TAKE ACTION:

Buy healthy food and look primarily for ecological products.

Prepare your own food from basic ingredients

Cut down on alcohol and avoid tobacco

Shopping list

Simply making a shopping list before going to the supermarket can be very useful. As you do your list at home you are not tempted by all the unhealthy, but delicious, food in the supermarket. You can focus on a list which contains only the food items that reduce eczema and are beneficial to your health.

It is important to have dried or fresh fruit and nuts readily available for when the sugar craving creeps up on you. A handful of raisins¹² and almonds¹³ is a delicious and healthy snack, filled to the brim with fibers, vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants.

Example of groceries that should always be in your kitchen:

Bread	Rye bread, wholegrain toast, flour and yeast
Vegetables	Carrots, tomatoes, squash, cabbage, onions, garlic
Meat	Fish, cold cuts from various meat sources
Beverages	Fruit juice and oat milk
Snacks	Nuts, fresh fruit, dates, raisins and other types of dried fruit
Other	Milk-free butter, wholegrain tortillas and pasta, müsli

Skincare

Your bath

Put on your favorite music and take your cup of morning coffee into the bathroom. This is your time to relax and take care of your skin, so that you are ready to step out into the world.

In this section I will give you my recipe for skincare developed through many years of trial and error in order to perfect the procedure. As a result eczema is no longer a problem in my life. Along with my dietary changes the skincare I will tell you about now has helped me to stay eczema-free for several years.

A daily bath is the most important element of your skincare. This is where you clean your skin so that the eczema is not worsened by a bacterial or fungal infection. A clean skin is also the foundation for an effective treatment with prescription cream. During the bath it is important to preserve the skin barrier as undisturbed as possible.

The top layer of your skin barrier is a combination of skin cells and fatty oils. Because of that combination the barrier is easily damaged by soap. This is why I stopped using soap, except when I need to clean spots of eczema before disinfecting them. As a replacement for soap I use fine table salt.

Salt is probably a novel product in your bathroom, but it very effectively helps you to gently scrub your skin clean. It is inexpensive and does not contain any problematic chemicals. It will even tell you in a gentle way if the skin is damaged by stinging a little. Pay special attention to such spots when applying your prescription creams.

There are two types of baths depending on whether you suffer from active eczema or not. That is why I will describe the bathing procedure in two different ways. The first is used when your eczema is active and needs treatment with prescription creams after the bath. The second is your normal bath when the skin is fine, but it still needs care and attention to keep the skin barrier intact.

For both types of bath the water should only be lukewarm while bathing and the final rinse can be cold, if you can manage it.

Before you begin your bath, take some time to inspect your body to evaluate where you have eczema-spots that should be treated after your bath with the creams prescribed by your doctor. Such a preparatory inspection makes it easier to focus on the spots during the bath as well as when applying various creams afterwards.

Place the various creams, deodorants and other remedies that you need after the bath on the bathroom table in the order that they will be applied.

The active eczema bath

For this bath you will need:

- Fine table salt
- Mild, allergy-friendly soap
- 0,2% peroxide solution
- A towel

The procedure is as follows:

- Start by rinsing your body with lukewarm water.

- Apply mild soap to the areas where the eczema is present and massage them gently
- Rinse off the soap
- Take a handful of fine salt and gently rub your entire body
- Rinse your body in lukewarm water
- Gently dry the body parts where eczema is present or usually appears. Apply 0,2 % peroxide solution to these areas of your body and leave it in for two minutes.
- Rinse your body in lukewarm or cold water until you feel refreshed
- Dry your body gently with your towel
- Apply your prescription cream to the eczema-spots. Do not apply other creams to these areas for at least ten minutes. This helps the effective absorption of the active compounds by the now clean and disinfected skin.
- Apply a moisturizing lotion to the skin not treated with prescription cream.
- After about ten minutes apply moisturizing lotion to the eczema spots as well.

Your normal bath

For this bath you will need:

- Fine table salt
- A towel

The procedure is as follows:

- Start by rinsing your body with lukewarm water.
- Take a handful of fine salt and gently rub it over your entire body
- Rinse your body with lukewarm water.
- Rinse your body in cold water until you feel refreshed
- Dry your body gently
- Apply moisturizing lotion to your entire body.

For practical reasons, I use a small plastic jar with a screw-on lid to hold the salt: just a small empty plastic container from supplements, vitamins or other kinds of food that you typically find in your household. If I drop it in the shower it won't break.

When using prescription steroid creams it is important to keep applying them even when there is no longer any

visible eczema. If you stop using them too soon you risk a rebound effect, with the eczema coming back again, after which a new treatment cycle becomes necessary. In the long run it is better to avoid such a stop-and-go strategy.

Cold showers

Cold showers might also be new to you. I have been doing cold showers for several years and they still demand some will-power. That, however, is the point. By challenging your mind and making the strong choice of opening the cold-water faucet, you train your mental willpower.

The health benefits of cold showers are numerous and especially important for eczema-patients since they reduce inflammation and boost the immune system¹⁴. Cold water on your skin makes it contract and thereby seals the pores so the oils of the skin stay inside.

My method is to begin with a normal, lukewarm shower and at the end take a couple of deep breaths to ready myself for the cold water. I think about all the benefits and remember that it is a challenge that I actively choose to take on. Then, I decisively turn the temperature knob to max. cold and let the water hit my chest after which I slowly count to thirty. When I get to thirty I turn around and take it on my back.

After another thirty seconds I turn around and do it all again for a second and final round.

After a cold shower you will feel stronger and more energized, and also proud of taking the hard road that only few people are willing to go down. By choosing this small discomfort you train your ability to accept the hardships you sometimes encounter in life.

Creams

Dermatologists recommend using creams with a high amount of fatty oils. These creams are normally labeled “for use on dry skin”. They maintain the barrier function of the skin by adding a layer of fat so allergens cannot get through.

The market for fatty creams is vast and you have to see what works for you. Most likely you already know a cream that is good for your skin. I prefer creams that are fatty but also easily absorbed by the skin and are free from perfume and potentially problematic ingredients.

My experience tells me that in order to maintain good skin health you must apply creams in the morning and evening.

In winter, an extra application during the day may be a good idea.

Remember to apply cream to your back and feet as well. The back can be hard to reach, but in time this daily “yoga session” will give you better shoulder flexibility. Put cream on both front and back of your hands before you begin the application on the back.

To ease the application of creams and lotions I use the following trick. Avoid rubbing your skin completely dry with your towel but leave it slightly moist. The residual moisture and water eases the application of the cream because it is diluted slightly. Furthermore, when applied to moist skin, the cream is absorbed more slowly and spreads out more easily.

CeraVe

My favorite cream is the CeraVe moisturizing lotion. I started using it after reading a couple of interesting articles about the benefits of ceramides. These fatty compounds are beneficial to people with a imperfect skin barrier such as eczema sufferers since ceramides fill the space between skin cells and act like mortar in a brick wall.

On [Amazon](#) there are more than thirty thousand positive reviews of the CeraVe-cream. After reading a lot of them I had to try the cream and first-hand experience what this CERAMIDE-thing was all about.

I bought two 340-gramme jars of CeraVe moisturizing cream from [lookfantastic.dk](#). The cream was very affordable compared to many other moisturizing creams for eczema patients. Such creams are often quite expensive, which makes them unattractive in the long run.

CeraVe cream is recommended by the National Eczema Association in the U.S.



Ceramides

People suffering from atopic dermatitis have dry skin: our skin barrier is compromised because we lack fatty oils, so-called lipids, in the top layer of our skin. This part of the skin is also known as the epidermis.

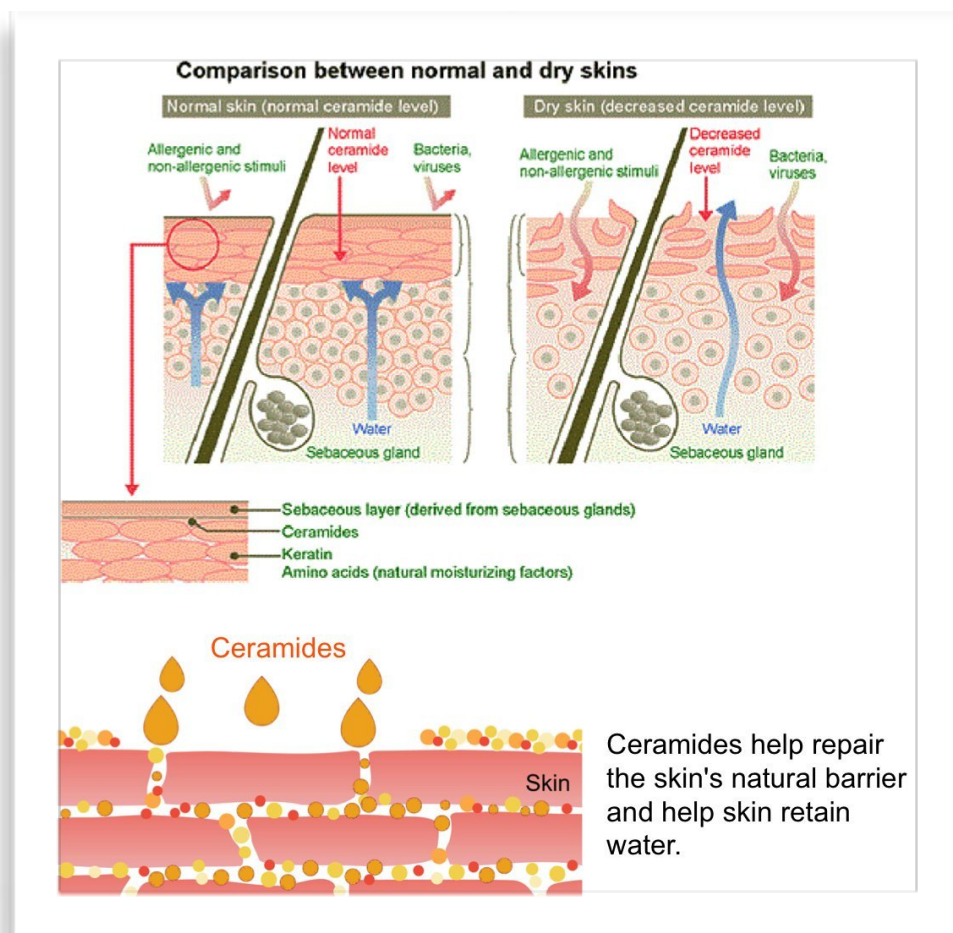
Ceramides are skin-identical compounds that are a normal part of our skin. In normal skin these fatty lipids represent approximately 50 percent of the top layer, where cholesterol and free fatty acids are the remaining elements. Their function is to keep the skin resistant to allergens and inhibit water from escaping the body.

People with normal skin can produce these lipids, including ceramides, to keep the skin barrier tight and sturdy. Eczema patients are not so lucky and do not produce enough to fill the spaces between the skin cells which is why the skin barrier becomes leaky.

By applying lipids and ceramides to the skin in the form of cream you can help the skin hold its cells together. This is the effect of adding these essential fats to the skin barrier.

As we age our skin dries as the amount of lipids in the skin diminishes. This is why adding creams containing ceramides becomes more important as we grow older.

The Ceramides in cream is produced synthetically or from natural sources, but chemically the two types are identical. Along with other fatty lipids such as glycerin, fatty acids, and cholesterol, ceramides work wonders for eczema skin.



References

Front page image: Photo by DAVIDCOHEN on Unsplash

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