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Treatment of Eczema with Chinese Medicine

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ABOUT ECZEMA

Eczema is a general term for many types of skin inflammation, also known as dermatitis. The most common form of eczema is atopic dermatitis. However, there are many different forms of eczema. Eczema is often very itchy and when you scratch it, the skin becomes red and inflamed. Eczema can affect people of any age, although the condition is most common in infants. The National Institutes of Health estimates that 15 million people in the United States have some form of eczema. About 10 percent to 20 percent of all infants have eczema; however, in nearly half of these children, the disease will improve greatly by the time they are between five and 15 years of age. Others will have some form of the disease throughout their lives.

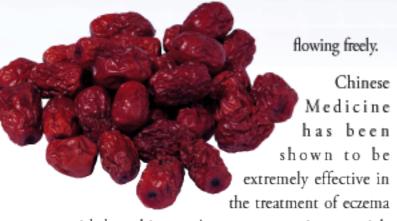
Although doctors do not know the exact cause of eczema, eczema is not contagious. But an abnormal function of the immune system is believed to be a factor. People with eczema often have a family history of the condition or a family history of other allergic conditions, such as asthma or hay fever. Up to 20% of children and 1-2% of adults

are believed to have eczema. Substances that come in contact with the skin, such as soaps, cosmetics, clothing, detergents, jewelry, or sweat, can trigger some forms of eczema. Environmental allergens may also cause outbreaks of eczema. Changes in the weather or even psychological stress for some people lead to outbreaks of eczema.

ABOUT CHINESE MEDICINE & ECZEMA

Chinese Medicine is a complete medical system that has been used to diagnose, treat, and prevent illnesses for more than 2,000 years. Chinese Medicine is based on a belief in Yin and Yang theory, that defined as opposing energies, such as hyperactive and hypoactive, sun and moon, exterior and interior, and hot and cold. When Yin and Yang are in balance, you feel healthy and energized. Out of balance, however, Yin and Yang negatively affect your health. In order for Yin and Yang to be balanced and for the body to be healthy, Qi (functional vital energy) must be balanced and





with long history. A recent report in two trials indicated benefit of herbal remedy over placebo. Both trials were double-blind and crossover in design. One trial was carried out in 47 children with atopic eczema, over an eight week treatment period. Active intervention comprised ten different plants traditionally used in Chinese medicine for eczema treatment. Of the 37 children analyzed, for erythema scores there was a 51% decrease with active and a 6.1% decrease for placebo. For surface damage scores there was a 63.1% decrease with active and a 6.2% decrease with placebo. The second trial was carried out in 40 adult patients, with similar methodology over an eight weeks treatment period. Improvement was the mean proportional change between the end of placebo and the end of active phase based on logarithmic values. Of the 31 adults analyzed, for erythema scores there was a 46% mean proportional change between the end of placebo and active phases. For surface damage scores there was a 49% mean proportional change between the end of placebo and active phases. Same research, Department of Immunology, UCL Medical School, London, they discovered that selected Chinese herbs have a significant effect on the production of white blood cells and thereby affect the immune system, reducing allergic responses and alleviating inflammation.

Above data suggests Chinese herbal medicine remedy benefit with eczema. Scientists predicted that there would be considerable therapeutic potential for Chinese herbal medicine, not only in the treatment of eczema, but also other skin diseases.

THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF ECZEMA

Atopic eczema

Atopic eczema is the most common of the many types of eczema, it is a chronic skin disease characterized by itchy, inflamed skin. Atopic dermatitis is believed to be caused by an abnormal function of the body's immune system. The atopic dermatitis affects about 10% of infants and 3% of adults in the U.S. When the disease starts in infancy, it is sometimes termed infantile eczema.

Contact eczema

Contact eczema is a localized reaction that includes redness, itching, and burning where the skin has come into contact with an allergen or with an irritant such as an acid, a cleaning agent, or other chemical, including reactions to laundry detergents, nickel jewelry, cosmetics, fabrics, clothing, and perfume. Skin reactions to poison ivy and poison sumac are examples of allergic contact eczema. People who have a history of allergies have an increased risk for developing contact eczema.

Seborrhea eczema

Seborrhea eczema is a form of skin inflammation. The signs and symptoms of seborrhea eczema include yellowish, oily, scaly patches of skin on the scalp, face, and occasionally other parts of the body. Seborrhea eczema is not necessarily associated with itching. This condition tends to run in families. Emotional stress, oily skin, infrequent shampooing, and weather conditions may all increase a person

risk of developing seborrhea eczema.

Nummular eczema

Nummular eczema is characterized by coinshaped patches of irritated skin, most commonly located on the arms, back, buttocks, and lower legs, that may be crusted, scaling, and extremely itchy. This form of eczema is relatively uncommon and occurs most frequently in elderly men. Nummular eczema is usually a chronic condition.

Neurodermatitis

Neurodermatitis, also known as lichen simplex chronicus, is a chronic skin inflammation caused by a scratch-itch cycle that begins with a localized itch, such as an insect bite, that becomes intensely irritated when scratches. Women are more commonly affected by neurodermatitis than men, and the condition is most frequent in people aged 20-50. This form of eczema results in scaly patches of skin on the head, lower legs, wrists, or forearms. Over time, the skin can become thickened and leathery. Stress can exacerbate the symptoms of neurodermatitis.

Stasis dermatitis

Stasis dermatitis is a skin irritation on the lower legs, generally related to the circulatory problem known as venous insufficiency, in which the function of the valves within the veins has been compromised. Stasis dermatitis occurs almost exclusively in middle-aged and elderly people, with approximately 6-7% of the population over age 50 being affected by the condition. The risk of developing stasis dermatitis increases with advancing age. Symptoms include itching and/or reddish-brown discoloration of the skin on one or both legs. Progression of the condition can

lead to the blistering, oozing skin lesions seen with other forms of eczema, and ulcers may develop in affected areas. The chronic circulatory problems lead to an increase in edema in the legs. Stasis dermatitis has also been referred to as varicose eczema.

Dyshidrotic eczema

Dyshidrotic eczema is an irritation of the skin on the palms of hands and soles of the feet characterized by clear, deep blisters that itch and burn. Dyshidrotic eczema is also known as vesicular palmoplantar dermatitis, dyshidrosis. This form of eczema occurs in up to 20% of people with hand eczema and is more common during the spring and summer months and in warmer climates.

ECZEMA DIAGNOSED

To diagnose eczema, doctors rely on a thorough physical examination of the skin as well as the patient's account of the history of the condition. In particular, the doctor will ask when the condition appeares, if the condition is associated with any changes in environment or contact with certain materials, and whether it is aggravated in any specific situations. Eczema may have a similar appearance to other diseases of the skin, so the diagnosis is not always simple. In some cases, a biopsy of the skin may be taken in order to rule out



other skin diseases that may producing signs and symptoms similar to eczema. If a doctor suspects that a patient has allergic contact dermatitis, allergy tests, possibly including a skin scratch test, may be carried out in an attempt to identify the specific trigger of the condition. Currently, there are no laboratories or blood tests that can be used to establish the diagnosis of eczema.

The eczema in clinic usually divided three stages as below,

Stage	Morphology of Lesions	Symptoms
Acute	Vesicles, blisters, intense red	Intense itch, stinging, burning
Sub acute	Red, scale, fissuring, parched appearance, scalded appearance	Slight to moderate itch, stinging, burning
Chronic	Thickened	Moderate to intense itch

TREATMENT OF ECZEMA WITH CHINESE MEDICINE

The most common Western approach to psoriasis is the use of topical steroid creams. This method may show quick initial result; however it is common that the body will develop tolerance to the steroid and increased concentrations of the steroids will be needed.

The Chinese Medicine approach to eczema is to differentiate the syndrome and decide on what the underlying cause is. From the Chinese medical viewpoint, eczema is brought about by the influence of 3 main pathogenic factors Wind, Heat, and Dampness. Wind can cause a large number of skin diseases characterized by generalized skin itching, or skin rashes with sudden onset and development. Dampness invades body also to be numerous skin diseases manifests with vesicles, papules or with skin

lesions oozing fluid, and with puffiness of skin. The long-term retained dampness will cause chronic eczema. *Heat* that includes toxic-heat that is a *Yang* pathogenic factor and it tends to injure the skin with red rashes, burning sensation, and swelling.

Using Chinese herbal medicine treatments help by: First, strengthening the immune system, thereby decreasing your sensitivity to external or environmental hazards. Second, balancing the internal organ systems and treating the internal imbalance that is contributing to or causing eczema. Third, releasing pathogenic factors from the skin such as wind, dampness, heat, thereby, eliminating the itchy, red or burning. The Chinese Herbal Medicine orally take and apply topically are used to treat root of the disease.

1. Commonly used single Chinese Medicine for eczema

(1)HERBS THAT EXPEL WIND AND STOP ITCHING

Herbal Name	Herbal action
Schizonepetae Herba (Jing Jie)	Expel wind, stop bleeding
Sophorae flavescentis Radix (Ku Shen)	Clear damp-heat, kill aprasites
Kochiae Fructus (Di Fu Zi)	
Dictamni Cortex (Bai Xian Pi)	Clear damp-heat & toxic- heat
Smilacis glabrae Rhizoma (Tu Fu Ling)	licat
Cnidii Fructus (She Chang Zi)	Dry dampness, kill parasites, warm Yang
Menthae Haplocalycis Herba (Bo He)	Expel wind-heat, vent rash, smooth Qi
Tribuli Fructus (Bai Ji Li)	Calm & smooth Liver, dispel wind

Bombyx batryticatus (Jiang Can)	Expel wind, stop spasms, transform phlegm, dissipate nodules
Borneolum (Bing Pian)	(Topically use), open the orifices, revive spirit, alleviate pain
Polygoni Multiflori Radix (He Shou Wu)	Nourish Blood, tonify Liver, benefit hair

(2)HERBS THAT DRY DAMPNESS AND CLEAR HEAT

Herbal Name	Herbal Action	
Rhei Radix et Rhizoma (Da Huang)	Close damp boat &r	
Phellodendri Cortex (Huang Bai)	Clear damp-heat &	
Coptidis Rhizoma (Huang Lian)	toxic-heat	
Violae Herba (Zi Hua Di Ding)		
Lobeliae Chinensis Herba (Ban Bian Lian)		
Hedyotis diffusae Herba (Bai Hua She She Cao)	Clear toxic-heat	
Taraxaci Herba (Pu Gong Ying)		
Chrysanthemi indici Flos (Ye Ju Hua)		
Lonicerae Flos (Jin Yin Hua)		
Plantaginis Herba (Che Qian Cao)		

(3) HERBS THAT CLEAR BLOOD HEAT

Isatidis Folium (Da Qing Ye)	is (Qing Dai) Clear toxic-heat	
Indigo naturalis (Qing Dai)		
Lithospermi Radix (Zi Cao)		
Moutan Cortex (Mu Dan Pi)	Circulate Blood	
Paeoriae Radix rubra (Chi Shao)		
Rehmanniae Radix (Sheng Di Huang)	Nourish Yin	
Sanguisorbae Radix (Di Yu)	Stop bleeding	

2. Commonly used Chinese Medical Formula for eczema

(1)Acute eczema

①Xiao Feng San (Tang-kuei & Arctium Formula)

Symptoms: usually worse on the upper body, manifesting as red papules and a small number of vesicles, mild exudation and incessant itching.

②Long Dan Xie Gan Tang (Gentiana Combination)

Symptoms: erythema papules, more vesicles, erosion, and exudation, severe itching, or with infections, thirst, irritability, constipation, and yellow urine.

③ Huang Lian Jie Du Tang (Coptis & Scute Combination)

Symptoms: dark-red papules, few vesicles and exudation, a sensation of scorching heat, intense itching, irritability, dry throat, thirst, constipation, dark yellow urine.

(2)Subacute eczema

① Yin Chen Wu Ling Tang (Capillaris & Hoelen Five Formula) or Bei Xie Shen Shi Tang

Symptoms: usually worse on the lower body with a dull and pale skin vesicles, and more exudation on rupture after scratching, itching, poor appetite, loose stool, lassitude.

② Tao Hong Si Wu Tang (Persica, Cathamus & Tang-kuei Combination) Symptoms: eczema tends to linger with persistent lesions distributed over the trunk and limbs, dark-red, or pale red erythema

and appear in various shapes, fewer vesicles,

more scaling, itching.

③ Qing Re Bu Xue Tang (Cnidium & Moutan Combination)
Symptoms: from persistent acute eczema, less exudation, purplish red papules, a sensation of burning heat, itching, irritability, dry mouth.

(3) Chronic eczema

① Zhi Bo Ba Wei Wan (Anemarrhea, Pell & Rehmannia Formula)

Symptoms: recurring subacute eczema, persistent red papules, thickened skin lesions, intense itch worse at night, thirst, palms heat sensation, constipation, and difficulty in falling sleeping.

② Bu Zhong Yi Qi Tang (Ginseng & Astragalus Combination)

Symptoms: moderate itching, thickened skin lesions with pale, vesicles and exudation, family history of allergy, high serum immunoglobulin (IgE) levels, spontaneous sweating, fatigue, pale complexion, poor appetite, diarrhea.

③ Ba Zhen Tang (Tang-Kuei & Ginseng Eight Combination)

Symptoms: moderate itching, skin thickened and lichenification, dry and cracked lesions, hypopigmentation, vesicles and exudation, itching severe at night, dizziness, lose hair.

3. Topical Application of Chinese Medical Formula for eczema

① Stop Itching Formula (Author experience formula)

Phellodendri Cortex (Huang Bai)	20g
Sophorae flavescentis Radix (Ku Shen)	15g
Coptidis Rhizoma (Huang Lian)	15g
Dictamni Cortex (Bai Xian Pi)	15g
Kochiae Fructus (Di Fu Zi)	15g
Borneolum (Bing Pian)	7g

The above herbs are decocted in an adequate amount of water 30 minutes, and then poured into a lukewarm bath where the patient's skin lesions should soak for approximately 20 minutes, twice daily.

② Zi Yun Gao (Lithospermum Ointment) This ointment put skin lesion 2-3 times daily.

PARENTING TIPS FOR ECZEMA

- Limit your contact with things that can irritate your skin.
- 2. Avoid scratching or rubbing the itchy area.
- 3. Avoid getting too hot and sweaty.
- 4. Learn how to manage stress in your life.
- Continue skin care even after your skin has healed.





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Dr. SHEN is one of the most highly educated professional in the field of Herbal Medicine and Acupuncture. In 1982, he earned his Bachelor's degree and in 1987 received his Master's degree in Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM). In 1997, he earned his Ph.D. in Medical School in Japan. Dr. Shen has received a postdoctoral fellow from Tokyo University School of Medicine in Japan and Vanderbilt. University School of Medicine TN.

Dr. SHEN is among the top in the field of both Western and Oriental Medicine. He has been published in approximately 40 peer reviewed scientific papers including the top academic journals in both Western and Oriental Medicine such as: Journal of Molecular Endocrinology, American Journal of Physiology, American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology, The Journal of traditional. Chinese Medicine. He has also contributed chapters to at least 5 scientific books. He is often invited to present lectures in many countries, such as Japan, China, Singapore, Canada, Europe, and the United States. He is presently a professor of South Baylo University and Director of Medical Research Center

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Professional Experiences:

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Medical Scientist	Charles Drew University-UCLA, School of Medicine, CA	11/00-10/03
Post-doctoral fellow	Vanderbilt University, School of Medicine, TN	4/98-11/00
Research fellow	Tokyo University, School of Medicine, Japan	10/97-3/98
Assistant Professor	Mile University, School of Medicine, Japan	3/97-9/97
Associate Professor	Nanjing University of Chinese Medicine, China	9/88-8/92
Resident Doctor	Zhenjiang Dagang Hospital, China	9/82-8/84

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CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS & INVITATIONAL

LECTURES:

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