

Eczema: Can changing your child's diet help?

Eczema is a commonly used term used for many varieties of skin condition, the most common form being atopic eczema, or atopic dermatitis. Eczema usually results in the skin developing dry scaly patches which often become red and painful. The most common symptom being simply itching due to irritation which leads to inflammation of the skin.

Many children develop some form of eczema during their childhood, however the majority of these children also grow out of it before they are 5 years old. Normally toddlers experience eczema around their legs, neck, head, cheeks and forehead, however as a child gets older the disease will target the creases of the joints, including the elbows and knees.

Diet plays a big role in controlling a child's allergic symptoms. The kind of diet will vary depending on how serious the condition is, however these are good guidelines to help your child's immune system react more 'normally' to allergens and reduce their symptoms.

I suggest that mainly natural foods are eaten, a child suffering from any allergic reaction should avoid eating man made products, anything that contains any artificial additives and food colourings should be avoided. It is important to eat foods high in amino acids and the essential fatty acids, as well as the normal vitamins and minerals.

Any children that have eczema and asthma normally have low levels of essential fatty acids, and depending on their age they can take a high quality chewable fish oil such as Solgar's children's fish oil or a liquid supplement such as IQ. The body

absorbs high levels of fatty acids when they occur naturally in the foods that we eat, therefore a child should eat 2 servings a week of oily fish such as fresh tuna, salmon, mackerel or sardines. A great way to give your child essential fats is to make a tasty smoothie, for example:

½ Banana

1-cup juice (apple, grape, pear, berry or pineapple)

1 Tbs. Soya yoghurt (eg Alpro)

1 Tbs. Flaxseed oil (a vegan source of essential fats)

Add all the ingredients together in a blender and mix.

Fresh or frozen berries or other fruits can also be added.

A simple allergy test may show that your child has an intolerance to common allergens such as dairy, so this can be reduced so see if it has an affect on their symptoms. Flower remedies and homeopathy have also be used with great success alongside a suitable well balanced diet.

Children will either positively or negatively effect their health by what they eat. The more healthy foods we eat, the better our bodies will function, and the healthier we will all be. In fact one of the easiest, most cost effective and best ways to improve the eczema symptoms is to eat healthily, so why not give it a go?



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