

Heathgate Medical Practice
Self-care leaflet – Eczema and dermatitis

This range of leaflets created by our clinical team provide useful information on a range of conditions that can in most cases be managed by patients at home. Where symptoms persist after a period of self-care or after advice from the local pharmacist, you should consider calling the surgery.

What is eczema and dermatitis?

Eczema and dermatitis are the same condition – an inflammation of the skin. There are many causes ranging from inherited to reaction to chemicals

How to manage the condition

Whatever the cause, there are some simple things that can control it and stop it getting worse:

- Make sure the skin doesn't get too dry – use a simple emollient bought from the supermarket or pharmacy. The best one is the one that suits you.
- Moisturise regularly every day and preferably twice a day
- Avoid chemicals that irritate the skin. These include common household cleaners, acids and alkalis. Be careful of latex gloves as they too can irritate.
- Unexpected causes of eczema include perfumes, make up and gel nails. Cement and oil exposure may result in severe hand eczema.
- Be careful too of soaps, body wash and some shampoos.
- If eczema is not managed by avoiding these irritants and using moisturisers you might need more intensive treatment.

Discuss with the community pharmacist in the first instance.

Further advice on managing these skin conditions is available at www.nhs.uk