Atopic dermatitis
Also called: eczema

An itchy inflammation of the skin.

**Very common**
More than 3 million US cases per year

- Treatable by a medical professional
- Usually self-diagnosable
- Lab tests or imaging not required
- Medium-term: resolves within months

Atopic dermatitis usually develops in early childhood and is more common in people who have a family history of the condition.
The main symptom is a rash that typically appears on the arms and behind the knees, but can also appear anywhere.

Treatment includes avoiding soap and other irritants. Certain creams or ointments also may provide relief from the itching.

**Symptoms**

**Usually self-diagnosable**
The main symptom is a rash that typically appears on the arms and behind the knees, but can also appear anywhere.

**People may experience:**
Skin: rashes, dryness, flakiness, bumps, fissures, peeling, or redness
Also common: itching

**Treatments**

**Treatment depends on severity**
Treatment includes avoiding soap and other irritants. Certain creams or ointments also may provide relief from the itching.

**Medications**

**Steroid:** Modifies or simulates hormone effects, often to reduce inflammation or for tissue growth and repair.
- Hydrocortisone (Solu-cortef, Anucort-hc, Cortaid, Corteft, and Pandel)
- Fluticasone (Cutivate)
- Betamethasone (Luxiq, Betaloan SUIK, Diprolene AF, Celestone Soluspan, and Sernivo)
- Methylprednisolone (Medrol, Solu-Medrol, and Depo-Medrol)
- Desonide (Desonate and Verdeso)
- Fluocinonide (Vanos and Fluocinonide-E)
- Alclometasone
- Fluocinolone acetonide
- Prednicarbate (Dermatop)
- Halcinonide (Halog)
- Mometasone
- Clobetasol (Olux, Olux-e, Clobex, Cormax, and Temovate)

**Antihistamine:** Reduces or stops an allergic reaction.
- Hydroxyzine
- Cetirizine (Zyrtec, Children's Cetirizine, Child Allergy Relief(cetirizine), All Day Allergy Relief(cetir), and Child's All Day Allergy(cetir))

**Topical antiseptic:** Destroys or prevents the growth of microorganisms on the skin that may cause infection.
- Triclosan

**Self-care**
- **Coal tar extract:** Soothes scaling and itching skin.
- **Ultraviolet light therapy:** Ultraviolet light therapy for serious skin diseases. Used along with a special medication that increases light absorption.
- **Moisturizer:** Hydrates and protects skin from damage.
- **Barrier cream:** A cream that soothes and protects irritated skin.
- **PUVA:** Applying UV light to the skin, often with a topical medication, to treat certain skin conditions.
- **Urea:** It can treat certain skin and nail conditions.

**Specialists**
- **Primary care provider (PCP):** Prevents, diagnoses, and treats diseases.
- **Pediatrician:** Provides medical care for infants, children, and teenagers.
- **Dermatologist:** Focuses on disorders of skin, nails, and hair.

Consult a doctor for medical advice

Note: The information you see describes what usually happens with a medical condition, but doesn't apply to everyone. This information isn't medical advice, so make sure to contact a healthcare provider if you have a medical problem. If you think you may have a medical emergency, call your doctor or an emergency number immediately.

**Sources:** Mayo Clinic and others. Learn more