



7 Home Remedies for Eczema Outbreaks

by KATHERINE TUDSBURY

Use These Simple Home Remedies for Eczema to Help Stop the Scratching

Eczema is an inflammatory skin condition that can be overwhelming for sufferers and may negatively affect sleep, social life and self-confidence.

Due to the itchy nature of eczema, people often cannot help scratching, which worsens the condition and leads to wounds, infection and scarring. It is important to find symptomatic relief to soothe the skin and prevent scratching.

While medication and prescription ointments for eczema can be effective, they often come with side effects. Luckily, there are several home remedies for eczema that can hydrate the skin and reduce itching, redness and inflammation. Some of these may already be in your kitchen cabinet!

Natural Home Remedies for Eczema

The best eczema remedies are those that hydrate the skin, soothe itching and reduce inflammation, as well as treat and prevent infections. We've compiled a list of the top home remedies for eczema to help you treat your outbreaks naturally.

1. Manuka Honey

Raw manuka honey originates in New Zealand and has been found to have anti-microbial, anti-inflammatory and skin-soothing properties. Recent studies have shown that manuka honey, when applied topically, can reduce the severity of atopic eczema.

When applying manuka honey to your skin, warm it lightly before spreading a thin layer onto the affected area. You can wrap the area with a bandage or leave the honey exposed, as long as you leave it on for 20 to 30 minutes. Gently wash the honey off with lukewarm water and then pat your skin dry.

2. Oatmeal Bath

Oatmeal is something most of us have in our kitchen, but did you know that it can be used to treat a variety of skin irritations? Soaking in a bath of finely ground oatmeal — also known as colloidal oatmeal — can relieve symptoms of eczema by forming a protective barrier on the skin and reducing inflammation.

You can make an oatmeal bath easily by grinding 1 to 2 cups of oatmeal in a blender or coffee grinder until it forms a thin powder that will suspend in water. Next, run a lukewarm bath and add the ground oatmeal, mixing it around until the water becomes a milky color. It's ideal to soak for about 10 minutes, as long baths can exacerbate eczema.

3. Coconut Oil

Coconut oil smells great and is a natural skin moisturizer that may soothe the symptoms of eczema and improve your skin's natural health barrier. Regularly applying coconut oil to eczema lesions can also reduce the risk of infection.

This hydrating and anti-inflammatory oil contains fatty acids called medium chain triglycerides (MCTs) that have anti-microbial and anti-fungal properties.

Coconut oil should be massaged directly into the affected areas once or twice per day to hydrate, soothe and protect the skin.

4. Aloe Vera Gel

The leaves of the succulent aloe vera plant provide a gel-like substance that is used for moisturizing skin treatments. There is evidence to suggest it has anti-oxidant, anti-inflammatory and anti-microbial effects on the skin. Aloe vera gel also contains humectants, which increase the water content of the skin.

Apply the pure aloe vera gel from the plant directly to the affected areas twice per day. You can also purchase an aloe vera cream or ointment as long as it is free from any harsh ingredients.

5. Chamomile Oil

Chamomile oil is an anti-inflammatory, soothing essential oil that may reduce the symptoms of chronic eczema when applied to the skin. It contains anti-oxidant compounds and has also been shown to have antibacterial and anti-fungal properties.

Make a topical blend by mixing three drops of chamomile oil with a tablespoon of carrier oil. You can apply this generously to the skin once or twice a day, as needed.

Chamomile can also be used aromatically to reduce mental and emotional stress and anxiety, and promote sleep, which are often problems during an eczema flare-up. Add a few drops of the oil to an oil diffuser or place some on your pillow at night.

6. Magnesium Salt Bath

A magnesium salt bath is a popular remedy to unwind after a long day, but did you know it may reduce the inflammation, itchiness and dryness of an eczema rash? Magnesium salts may also improve skin hydration by drawing moisture into the skin.

Add 1 to 2 cups of Epsom salts or magnesium chloride bath salts to a lukewarm bath and soak in it for 10 to 15 minutes to get relief.

7. Sunlight

It might sound too good to be true but exposing your skin to a moderate amount of sunlight can improve the symptoms of eczema.

While the reasons behind this are not yet fully understood, we know that sunlight exposure increases vitamin D levels and releases anti-inflammatory skin compounds. Healthy vitamin D levels are linked to a stronger and more balanced immune system, and we know that immune system dysfunction is one of the underlying causes of eczema flare-ups.

You can harness this treatment by exposing large areas of skin to the full spectrum of sunlight between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. But limit this to 10 to 15 minutes per day as the sun still holds risks, especially for individuals with a compromised skin barrier.

Final Thoughts

In addition to identifying and eliminating external irritants and foods that may be triggering your symptoms, using topical home remedies (like a DIY eczema cream) can help you to find relief from eczema.

While the remedies mentioned here are generally safe to use, it is important to consult with your doctor or dermatologist before beginning a new treatment.