The Best and Worst Fabrics for Eczema

by ERIC PATTERSON

Fabrics to Avoid with Eczema

People with eczema know the challenges and complications caused by the condition. They also know that making small changes to their daily life can lead to noticeable results with their skin and comfort.

One way to improve life with eczema is to modify the clothes you wear and the fabrics that come into contact with your skin. By changing what you wear, you can change the way you feel and limit the impact eczema has on your life.

The Most Common Eczema Symptom

Many people with eczema agree that the intense itchiness is one of the most problematic elements of the condition. Once the itching begins, it can take days or weeks for this symptom to dissipate.

The need to itch and scratch your skin usually starts as a mild distraction that makes it difficult to focus on the task at hand. With time though, the itching can turn into a significant source of distress.

Lotions and creams as well as behavioral changes can make the itchiness less prevalent, but prevention is the best course of action. It turns out that changing your clothing could be a great way to limit your symptoms and improve your lifestyle. So, it is important to understand both the fabrics that could limit your eczema symptoms and the fabrics to avoid with eczema.

Cotton: The Safest Choice

Many people with eczema report that cotton is their preferred fabric. By wearing clothes made of 100% cotton, you can avoid some symptoms of eczema and feel comfortable in a variety of situations and settings.

If you notice cotton works well to keep your eczema symptoms under control, consider using cotton as a fabric for other items your skin comes into contact with. You can use cotton for:

- Washcloths.
- Bath towels.
- Sheets.
- Pillowcases.
- Blankets.
- Bath robes.

Fortunately, you can easily find a wide range of cotton options for these household stables. Depending on the severity of your eczema, you may require certain types of cotton that ensure a softer or gentler feel on your skin; spending more money on higher-quality items may be a sound investment.

Remember, many cotton products may be coated or contaminated with chemicals and dyes. These substances can irritate the skin, so be sure to wash all of your clothing before you attempt to wear them.

Fabrics to Experiment with

Having eczema may mean that all other fabrics are off-limits, but some people can tolerate other fabrics. If your success with cotton has been strong, you can try to branch out into other fabrics such as:

- Silk.
- Linen.
- Soft acrylics.

These fabrics can be 100% pure or blended with cotton. Rather than experimenting with a variety of new fabrics and textures all at once, try to find one new material and slowly integrate it into your wardrobe.

By using a slow and steady approach, you can work to identify and isolate specific materials that are either leading to success or problems for your eczema. Document your findings and adjust your shopping behaviors based on this.

Fabrics to Avoid When You Have Eczema

Unfortunately, there are no strict rules as everyone who has eczema is different and may have unique experiences with fabric choices. However, two of the most well-known eczema flare triggers (in terms of fabrics) are wool and synthetic fibers.

New types of synthetic fibers with new names are being introduced to the market all the time. So, you will want to stay educated and vigilant while doing your shopping. Some options may even have the word “cotton” in the name, which can be misleading.

The Fit and the Fabric

Often, a fabric will create problems no matter how it fits. Other times, the fit will determine the effects it has on the skin.

When you head out shopping, look for clothing that is:

- Soft: no matter the material or the quality, buying an item that is rough or scratchy could trigger a flare in your eczema symptoms. Be sure to find clothes that are soft and comfortable to limit the problems with your skin.
- Loose: you may find the perfect shirt or underwear, but it can still create issues if it is too tight. When a piece of clothing is overly snug, it can irritate your skin.
- Seasonal: picking items that are too heavy or thick when the weather is warm can lead to sweating and additional discomfort. Keep your clothing choices light and cool to minimize the risk of eczema symptoms.
- Comfortable: when preparing to make a purchase, look the item over completely. How are the seams? Are there any problematic tags or areas that could rub your skin? Just one little area could make even the softest shirt unwearable.

With eczema, it may seem like an impossible mission to find the right piece of clothing or the sheets. Don’t be discouraged, though. Suitable items exist for every person who is willing to experiment.