

I Skin

As the largest organ, our skin is a mirror of both external and internal factors. It is consistently exposed to the weather and is our first defense against disaster. It regulates body temperature, stores water, fat, vitamin D and can sense pleasant and painful stimulation. Removed from our bodies, our skin weighs about six pounds.

Within these six pounds are three layers - the epidermis, dermis and subcutis (fat layer). These layers work together to collect nutrients, build strong cell membranes and provide healthy skin.

Cell membranes need to be strong in order to hold moisture resulting in plumper, younger skin. Cell membranes are also responsible for the movement of nutrients and waste in and out of the cell. Skin cells are susceptible to the same inflammatory process that can harm our arteries and cause heart disease, according to Samantha Heller, MS, RD, a clinical nutritionist at NYU Medical Center in New York City. (Bouchez 2005)

Skin is affected by many aggravators and is directly related to our diet. (Boelsma, van de Vijver et al. 2003) It is not uncommon for a sudden case of acne, eczema, psoriasis and other chronic skin diseases to result from poor nutritional intake.

II Recommendations

Eczema is an inflammatory problem often caused by food sensitivities, low HCl, use of NSAIDs, leaky gut, environmental contaminants and genetic predisposition. There are numerous aggravators such as stress, heat, hormones, pets, wool and food. Some specific aggravating foods include: eggs, cow's milk, food coloring, tomatoes, fish, goat's milk, cheese, chocolate and wheat.

Possibly Bob's eczema is a result of a change in diet, specifically a reduction in EFAs. But I would want to ask Bob a few more questions for clarity:

Does he have a history of childhood eczema?

What, specifically, is his current diet?

When does the reaction usually occur (in association with eating)?

Is there a history of diarrhea or constipation?

Are there other digestive issues he has experienced?

Any change in life style, stressors?

How often does Bob take NSAIDs?

Eczema is controllable by reducing stress, allergens and aggravators. The goal for us, Bob, is to find these aggravators and create a holistic approach to healthier skin:

- a. Review diet
- b. Test for low HCl

- i. Beet juice test
 - ii. pH tests
- c. Natural creams/salves with calendula, comfrey, licorice or Echinacea.
- d. Vacuum/clean house to remove dust and possible allergens
- e. Use soap-free cleansers
- f. Diet – increase EFAs
 - i. Salmon
 - ii. Walnuts
 - iii. Flax seed
 - iv. Canola oil
 - v. Supplements of Omega-3s and Omega-6s
- g. Exercise – stabilizes the hypothalamic-pituitary axis
- h. Restore flora – 1-2 capsules a day or ¼ - ½ teaspoons, 3 times daily (mixed with cool beverage)
- i. Add a multi-vitamin to regime
- j. Dr. Wright's prescription(Elizabeth Lipski 1996)
 - i. 50 mg zinc, 3 times daily for six weeks
 - ii. 2 mg copper daily
 - iii. 5 grams omega-3 fatty acids, 2 times daily for 3 months
 - iv. 1-2 grams omega-6 fatty acids, 3 times daily for 4 weeks
- k. Elimination diet – if needed

2. Additional tests – if necessary

- a. allergy
- b. food sensitivities
- c. digestive and stool analysis
- d. intestinal permeability

III Why and what for:

EFA's

EFA's are essential for healthy skin. Research from the 1930s to the 1950s established that a deficit of n-6 essential fatty acids (EFA's) leads to an inflammatory skin condition in both animals and humans. (Horrobin 2000)

“Dietary consumption of certain plants or fish oil is known to modulate the balance of lipid inflammatory mediators and, therefore, is valuable in the treatment of inflammatory skin disorders.” (Boelsma, Hendriks et al. 2001)

One can also use [gamma linolenic acid \(GLA\)](#). This is one of the few omega-6 fats that are actually useful as a supplement. Doses are about 1000 to 3000 mg per day. (Mercola 2005)

Corticosteroid creams

Corticosteroid creams suppress the immune system and are known to cause cancer.(Mercola 2005) These are not recommended but need to be discussed as it is a common treatment.

The two brands of cream under investigation by government scientists are Protopic and Elidel. We can expect to find stricter labeling in the future.

(Stein 2005)

Probiotics

In a recent study at Turku University, Turku, Finland, it was interpreted that "*Lactobacillus* GG was effective in prevention of early atopic disease in children at high risk. Thus, gut microflora might be a hitherto unexplored source of natural immunomodulators and probiotics, for prevention of atopic disease."(Kalliomäki M 2003)

Topical Salve

Of 4500 patients with inflammatory skin conditions, including psoriasis, 85% were cured with topical applications of echinacea salve.(Wacker & Hilbig 1978)

Calendula is perhaps best known for its effectiveness in healing skin problems such as wounds, burns, insect bites, eczema, skin ulcers, and rashes. Research suggests that calendula gently stimulates the immune system and promotes lymphatic drainage, reduces inflammation and pain, lowers cholesterol and triglycerides, and inhibits tumor growth.(Mayes 2003)

Balanced Life

A balanced life of healthy eating, exercise and low stress will help Bob reach his maximum potential. Flexibility and adaptation will be necessary to find what works best.

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