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National Eczema Week 17 – 25 September 2018

What are YOU doing about your eczema?

If you're looking for a bit of advice, information or reassurance about eczema, here is what I did about mine. First things first, if you have eczema (or your child), it's **your** responsibility to do something about it. Don't wait for your GP to write you a magic prescription – there is no cure but there are many, many ways to manage it, and in my experience, most of them are things your GP won't mention.

Based on all the steps I have taken to improve my own eczema I have written a booklet about how to manage your own skin issues, and created the Eczema Survival Pack, which contains the book along with lots of other bits and pieces that will help you to control your eczema. I had appalling eczema for more than a decade, until I got out of bed one morning and said to myself "enough". My skin was manageable within about 6 months. It wasn't easy (mine was severe) but I had a lot to learn. Here are some of the things that I learnt along the way. They helped me, and different things may work for you, but here are some things to think about:

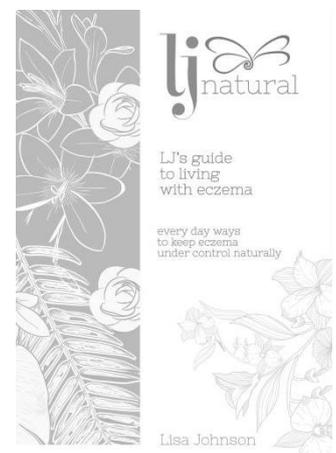
1. Have you thought about allergy tests? Could it be milk, wheat, nuts, soya etc? Ask your doctor for tests if your eczema is bad, but I wouldn't self diagnose, you could cut out an essential food group. You can also get tests done privately if your GP is reluctant to refer you. Google York Test.

2. Whilst your eczema is bad you need to do everything you can not to irritate it further: use an organic or natural washing powder (from your health food shop – don't bother with supermarket ones that say they are for sensitive skin, even they have perfume and other skin irritants in). I use Ecover, I find it excellent. Surcare is another brand that you can easily buy and many customers use this successfully.

3. BE CAREFUL what you use on your skin. Personally, I would not use any baby oil or vaseline or any products with petrochemicals in, they suffocate the skin and actually dry it out even more. Obviously, do not use any artificial perfumes or fragrance at all. Try to use all organic and natural products (such as mine ...). Parabens & sulphates also irritate sensitive skin. Learn to read skincare ingredients and opt for natural all the time.

4. Read up as much as you can to understand it; go to your library, get books out about it. Read my book, which covers everything I have learnt about over the past ten years. If you are seeing your GP about eczema, ask for a booklet about managing it. Understand the condition.

5. Cut your fingernails very short, as scratching with long or mucky fingernails will make it inflamed and sore, and possibly infected. Keeping fingernails short is



absolutely central in helping to break the “itch-scratch” cycle. Very short nails do far less damage to already damaged skin.

6. Recognise when you are stressed and try to break the cycle; go for a massage, or a run or a drink with an old friend, read a really great book, learn mindfulness, whatever you need to do to stop the stress...

7. Drink lots of filtered water, room temperature is best. Chamomile tea is very good. There are also some herbal teas that are good for clearing skin, with nettle or other liver clearing herbs. Pop to your local health food shop and have a look what they’ve got.

8. Think about taking good quality supplements, a pro-biotic and high strength fish oil (or flaxseed if you are vegetarian). Again, go to your health food shop and ask them what they recommend, or speak to a nutritionist/naturopath. I can recommend one if you want.

9. Keep dust to a minimum, house dust mite poo makes most people’s eczema worse. Damp dust otherwise you are just moving the dust around, rather than getting rid of it. Vacuum a lot or have wooden floors.

10. Get out in the fresh air. Sunshine is good for eczema in small doses, and staying cooped up in doors in either centrally heated or air conditioned environments is not good as it will dry your skin even more.

As mentioned above, you will find endless information about how to manage eczema over on my blog page, and my eczema book really does cover everything which could change your life.

There will be times when you must use GP prescribed steroid creams to calm an infection or bad flare up, but long-term, this isn’t the answer. It thins the skin, which means when eczema comes back, the skin is even less able to deal with it. Dealing with your eczema is about STOPPING it coming in the first place, instead of trying to fire fight once it’s arrived.

Learn to recognise when it’s on its way and do what you can to minimise it. I have overcome very painful & stressful eczema and now I’m regularly told how lovely my skin is. So believe it is possible to do something about even very bad eczema.

Check out the LJ range of natural and organic skincare products specifically created with eczema in mind, made using just plant oils and no synthetic ingredients:

1. Organic Scratchy Balm: 50g £9.95, 10g £2.50
2. Organic Scratchy Soap: 100g £5.95
3. Organic Scratchy Hand Lotion: 50g £9.95
4. Organic Very Sensitive Face Oil: 30ml £12.95
5. Organic Very Sensitive Moisturiser: 60g £12.95
6. OMG Serum – Sensitive: 30ml £18.95
7. Organic Calming Bath/Body Oil: 100ml £10.95
8. Book: LJ’s Guide to Living with Eczema: £5.95
9. The Eczema Survival Pack: £9.95

