

Study shows painful eczema symptoms negatively impact quality of life

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If you've never suffered from eczema, also known as Atopic Dermatitis, you probably aren't aware of the negative impact it can have on quality of life. The severe itching, redness and excessively dry skin all make life miserable for those who suffer from the allergic disease.

A new study published in *Annals of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology*, the scientific journal of the American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (ACAAI) surveyed 602 adults with eczema. The study reports symptoms that caused the biggest burden were itch (54 percent) followed by excessive dryness or scaling (19 percent) and red or inflamed skin (7 percent). Skin pain and sleep disturbance were the next most burdensome symptoms.

"Those with moderate or severe eczema were less likely to report itch or excessive dryness or scaling as their most burdensome symptoms," says Jonathan I. Silverberg, MD, Ph.D., MPH, lead author of the study. "A higher proportion of that group reported blisters or bumps, sleep disturbance, pain and open sores or oozing as their most burdensome symptoms. In addition, a high percentage of all those surveyed considered themselves to only have fair (25 percent) or poor (15 percent) overall health and reported being somewhat (16 percent) or very (11 percent) dissatisfied with life compared to those who do not have eczema."

The authors of the study found that eczema was associated with a worse quality of life than several other common chronic illnesses including heart disease, diabetes and [high blood pressure](#). Moderate and severe eczema were associated with dramatically lower quality of life than all other chronic disorders examined.

"We were not surprised to discover that symptoms of eczema can lead to mental health disturbance and impaired quality of life," says [allergist](#) Luz

Fonacier, MD, ACAAI Fellow and co-author of the study. "Even those with mild eczema reported it limited their lifestyle, impacted activities or led to avoidance of social interactions. The harmful effects were even worse for those with moderate and severe eczema. Almost half of adults with severe eczema reported quite a bit or a great deal of a burden in their lives."

The good news for those who suffer from eczema is new and existing treatments can reduce the severity of symptoms like itching and excessively dry skin. Eczema is a chronic condition, and symptoms can come and go. An allergist can help you find relief from this chronic disease. Allergists are specialists in allergic diseases like eczema and are trained to help you take control of your symptoms so you can live the life you want.

To find an allergist near you who can help create a personal plan to deal with your [eczema](#), allergies and asthma, use the ACAAI allergist locator.

More information: J.I. Silverberg et al. Patient-burden and quality of life in atopic dermatitis in US adults: A population-based cross-sectional study, *Annals of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology* (2018). DOI: [10.1016/j.anai.2018.07.006](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.anai.2018.07.006)

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