



SKIN (ITCHY OR DRY)

Dry, cracked, irritated or itchy skin

CAUSES

AGING

Ageing may cause a person's skin to dry out when the number of oil glands in an older person's skin is reduced. The condition is not serious and can be minimized.

Symptoms:

- Dry, scaly skin especially in older people.

DO:

- Moisturize with lotion or cream especially in particularly dry areas such as the elbows, knees, ankles and hands.
- Drink eight glasses of water a day.

DON'T:

- Don't expose yourself to extreme sunlight or cold weather.

IRRITANTS

Skin may become dry and itchy because of allergens coming into contact with skin. A new cosmetic product such as shampoo, soap, make-up, deodorant or other cosmetics may irritate the skin and cause it to become dry and itchy.

MEDICATIONS

Topical creams for acne or drugs to abate high cholesterol levels can sometimes cause dry, itchy skin. Ask your doctor about possible side effects before taking medication.

PRURITIS

Pruritis is simply a fancy name for itching. However, in this case, skin on the lower legs and upper arms may itch or develop cracked patches. Very dry air is usually the cause of pruritis.

This condition, though common and usually not serious, may indicate the presence of underlying disorders such as eczema, diabetes and kidney disease.

Symptoms:

- Itchy and cracked skin

DO:

- Bathe daily and practise proper hygiene.
- Use calamine lotion to soothe itchiness.
- If itching is severe, apply an ice pack to the area.

DON'T:

- Don't use harsh soaps as they remove natural oils from the skin.
- Do not scratch itchy area. Wounds and a possible infection may develop. Stroking the area with the finger pads instead of the nails is a good alternative.