

## Hand Dermatitis

Hand dermatitis (hand eczema) is a common problem. Hand rashes usually result from a combination of sensitive skin and irritation from materials touched. Our hands are routinely exposed to irritating soaps, detergents, raw foods, solvents, paints, oils, greases, acids, glues, etc. at work or home.

Not everyone suffers from hand dermatitis. Many individuals have "tough" skin but unfortunately, some have skin that is easily irritated. This results in dermatitis. People suffering from hand dermatitis often have dermatitis elsewhere, and frequently blood relatives have similar issues.

Skin protection is an important part of treatment. This instruction sheet gives you detailed directions on how to protect your hands.

1. Protect your hands from direct contact with soaps, detergents, scouring powders, and similar irritating chemicals by wearing waterproof, heavy duty vinyl gloves. Keep several pairs conveniently located in kitchens, bathrooms and laundry areas. If a glove develops a hole, discard it immediately wearing a glove with a hole is worse than wearing no gloves at all.
2. The gloves may be lined or unlined. You should have enough waterproof gloves so that the insides of the gloves can dry between wearing.
3. Wear waterproof gloves while peeling or squeezing fruits or vegetables.
4. If your hands sweat inside the rubber gloves, this can aggravate your dermatitis. Wearing thin cotton gloves under the rubber gloves or using lined rubber gloves often helps. Cotton gloves are available at many drug stores or can be purchased from Allerderm Laboratories. Make certain to change your gloves if they become wet inside due to either perspiration or spills.
5. Wear leather gloves or heavy-duty fabric gloves when doing dry work or gardening. Dirty your gloves – not your hands. [If you keep house for your family, scatter a dozen pairs of gloves around your home for use while doing dry housework.] If they become dirty, wash them in the washing machine.

Protective gloves may be ordered from Allerderm Laboratories.

Please visit [www.myskinallergy.com](http://www.myskinallergy.com) to view all of Allerderm Laboratories products.

## Treatment

1. The most important part of your treatment requires a dedication to maintain adequate hydration of the skin. You should apply a coat of moisturizing cream every time your hands have been wet. This is imperative. Your moisturizing cream should be free of fragrances. We recommend Eucerin, Aquaphor, Vaseline Jelly, Lubriderm, Moisturel, Cetaphil, and Vaseline Intensive Care. In general, "the thicker, the better".
2. Minimize the use of soap and rinse well when washing your hands. Use only lukewarm water without soap when possible. Gentle soaps, which we recommend, include Dove, Neutrogena, oil of Olay, Purpose, and Basis.
3. Your prescription cortisone cream/ointment should be used two to three times daily. As your hands improve, slowly reduce the frequency of application.
4. Hand dermatitis is stubborn and often easily flares. Be diligent in their protection and their treatment. A small percentage of patients unresponsive to this regimen will require patch testing for potential allergies.