

# The 5-Step Approach to Allergy Prone Skin



If you have eczema or allergy-prone skin, you are not alone.

The National Eczema Society estimates that today 1 in 5 children and 1 in 12 adults suffer from some form of eczema. The aim of writing this article is to offer some helpful skincare tips \* based on our experience. We would also like to ensure that you get the most from you Essential Care products.\*

## Step 1: Keep the skin clean

*– especially important for eczema-prone skin*

Bacteria, particularly Staphylococcus aureus, are one of the most important triggers of eczema (they are found on over 90% of eczematous skin and 5% of normal skin). Staphylococcus aureus can activate the immune system around them, which manifests as an irritation on the skin. (Ultra Rich contains a herb specifically active against this type of bacteria). Wash hands frequently and keep fingernails short. Keep the skin clean using cool or warm (not hot) water and use mild, non-irritating cleansers as necessary (see side panel). Dry gently.

The skin's lipids (fatty substances) that hold skin cells together, tend to be less abundant with eczema and dermatitis. This can be due to unusually low production by the skin cells, but may also be due to excess removal of lipids through repeated use of harsh soap and detergents. It is therefore very important to avoid cleansing products that may further dry and irritate the skin (see below).

## Step 2:

### Use the power of plants

*to alleviate itching and promote healing*

Scratching itchy skin activates the immune system in the affected area as it causes the release of chemical trigger substances which initiate other immune reactions. Hence the 'itch-scratch cycle'. The conventional answer to this problem is steroid creams which suppress the immune system. But stopping itching and inflammation with herbs such as chickweed and chamomile is kinder to the body and may offer a more long term solution. In fact, the level of concentration of the particular chamomile we use in our preparations has been shown to be at least as effective at reducing inflammation as mild hydrocortisone (steroid), but without the negative side effects.

Other herbs such as calendula and aloe vera have proven powerful skin-healing capabilities.

A damaged aloe vera leaf seals over quickly with a film and a rubber-like protective coating to prevent the loss of water.

In a short time, the wound heals completely. The enzymes that enable this process have a similar effect in humans. Aloe vera helps foster the growth of healthy new tissue and has been shown to penetrate to the water-retaining second layer of skin, helping to eradicate dead cells which not only rejuvenates the skin but also fights infection.

## Step 3: Moisturise naturally

Emollients or moisturisers are extremely important to rehydrate dry, irritated skin. By penetrating between the skin cells, a good emollient helps to substitute for the lack of the skin's own lipids, reducing dryness, moisture loss, and access by infection-causing organisms. Commonly prescribed emollients, including aqueous cream, are based on petroleum derivatives like paraffin wax, mineral oil and petroleum jelly which tend to clog the skin pores because the molecules are too large to be absorbed. Whilst this petroleum barrier reduces moisture loss, it also prevents the skin from breathing, secreting toxins and shedding the heat generated by inflammation. Generally described as 'inert' with no active skin benefits, petroleum oils tend to absorb the vitamins A and E from the skin, so vital for its maintenance and repair.

Products such as ours, based on virgin cold-pressed plant oils, with all their health-promoting vitamins and minerals intact, are readily absorbed by the skin, provide excellent moisturisation and actively encourage the natural healing process. As an added bonus, these oil-soluble vitamins protect the skin from premature ageing by combating 'free radical' damage caused by exposure to the elements and pollution! Shea butter, olive, macadamia, sesame and coconut oils are particularly effective. Little and often is the key, keeping the skin moisturised at all times.

## Using Organic Repair Lotion:

Margaret developed Organic Repair Lotion over 20 years of research and her own experience of eczema to find the most effective natural powerpack for irritated, dry and broken skin. It contains a synergistic blend of 10 skin-friendly, yet powerfully healing and soothing organic herbs in a base of vitamin-rich organic plant oils which calm, soothe and promote healing. Whilst relief can be immediate, do bear in mind that the skin takes a full 28 days to regenerate and repair. Apply gently, to the affected areas, without rubbing, at least twice a day as needed.



## Using Ultra Rich:

Ultra Rich is an emollient blend of pure, organic plant oils, shea butter and beeswax for moisturising and protecting very dry, disturbed skin. It is safe for use on babies and on broken skin. Very rich in texture, it is rapidly absorbed and doesn't block the pores, thus allowing the skin to breathe. It also contains the traditional wound-healing herb St John's Wort (hypericum), at a concentration which has proved to actively reduce bacterial build-up on the skin and fight infection. Apply little and often to clean skin, either alone or on top of Repair Lotion for extra moisturisation and protection. It is also suitable for applying under wet-wraps.



## TIP:

Apply a little Ultra Rich to affected areas before bathing and showering – it is more efficient (and economical!) for moisturising than adding to the bathwater.