



# ECZEMA - INFECTIONS

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Flare-ups and hard to control eczema are often due to a coexisting bacterial, and sometimes fungus or virus, infection. If your eczema is weeping or oozing, if it crusted, or if it has small bumps, your doctor will probably test or treat for bacterial infection.

Systemic antibiotics are often necessary to decrease the irritation caused by Staph bacteria on the skin. Most patients with eczema have Staph bacteria on their skin, and this can cause irritation even without overt infection. In acute flares, antibiotic treatment usually lasts from 14 to 28 days. Chronic maintenance antibiotics may be used if you develop infections repeatedly. Some have found success by adding very dilute bleach to the bathwater-no more than a tablespoon for a full bathtub. Topical antibiotics like Neosporin should not be recommended and most antibacterial cleansers may worsen the condition.

Rarely, the cold sore virus (Herpes simplex) may cause extensive local or widespread infection, and is usually treated with oral antiviral medication.

**This information has been provided to you compliments of the American Osteopathic College of Dermatology and your physician.**

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