

# The ABCs of Atopic Dermatitis

## Do you have a history of itchy skin plus at least three of the following?

If your answer is yes, then **atopic dermatitis (AD)** may be a condition you may want to speak to your doctor about.<sup>1\*</sup>

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- A Asthma: Do you have asthma or did you have it as a child?**  
AD is commonly associated with allergies such as asthma. In fact, approximately 50% of people with AD will also develop asthma.<sup>2</sup>
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- B Baby: Did your skin problems begin before the age of two years?**  
AD occurs most often in infants and children, but can present or flare up at any age.<sup>3</sup> In fact, 45% of people living with AD are diagnosed by 6 months of age, and approximately 85% are diagnosed by the age of 5.<sup>2</sup>
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- C Creases: Is your skin condition most prominent within the skin creases?**  
AD will often affect the parts of the body that we're able to flex or bend (also referred to as the flexural areas). These include the front of elbows, behind the knees, front of ankles and around the neck.<sup>1</sup>
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- D Dry skin: Have you had dry skin for more than 12 months?**  
In addition to intense and persistent itchy skin, a history of dry skin is a very common symptom of AD.<sup>1</sup>
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- E Exercise: Does your skin feel itchy when you sweat?**  
In people with AD, heat and sweating are thought to irritate the skin and make it itchy.<sup>4</sup>
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- F Feeling frosty: Does your skin get worse in winter?**  
AD can often flare up in winter due to a combination of cold air and indoor heating systems, both of which cause and exacerbate dry skin.<sup>5</sup>
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- G Grandparents, parents and siblings: Does anyone in your family have eczema, hay fever or asthma?**  
A family history of allergies remains the strongest risk factor of AD. If one or both parents have AD or an allergic condition, the child is much more likely to develop AD.<sup>5</sup>
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- H Hay fever: Do you have hay fever or did you have it as a child?**  
AD is commonly associated with allergies such as hay fever (also referred to as allergic rhinitis).<sup>4</sup> In fact, two thirds of people with AD will also develop hay fever.<sup>2</sup>
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- I Irritation: Is your skin irritated by wool?**  
Wool fibres are frequently used in clothing, however for those with AD, they can be irritating when in direct contact with the skin.<sup>4</sup>
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\*The health information provided above is for general educational purposes only. Your doctor is the single best source of information regarding your health. Please speak to your doctor if you have any questions about your health or treatment.

### References

1. The U.K. Working Party's Diagnostic Criteria for Atopic Dermatitis. III. Independent hospital validation. *Br J Dermatol* 1994;131(3):406-16.
2. Spigel JM, Paller AS. Atopic dermatitis and the atopic march. *J Allergy Clin Immunol* 2003;112:118-127.
3. NHS Choices. Atopic Eczema (Atopic Dermatitis). Available at: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/atopic-eczema/> (Accessed June 2022).
4. The U.K. Working Party's Diagnostic Criteria for Atopic Dermatitis. I. Derivation of a minimum set of discriminators for atopic dermatitis. *Br J Dermatol* 1994;131(3):383-96.
5. NHS Choices. Atopic Eczema (Causes). Available at: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/atopic-eczema/causes/> (Accessed June 2022).