

# Can Glutathione Relieve the Symptoms of Skin Disease?

Many people suffer from debilitating skin disorders and diseases, many of which can be prevented by boosting antioxidant levels in the body. Increased levels of natural antioxidants, such as glutathione have been shown to prevent damage, destruction and death of vital skin cells. Skin the largest and one of the most important organs in the body. Our skin acts as a natural barrier to prevent damaging toxins, chemical agents, bacteria and viruses from entering our bodies, which can cause a variety of serious diseases and conditions. The skin is composed of an intricate cellular structure, including a strong natural defense mechanism to prevent the damaging effects of toxins. The molecules contained in skin cells help reduce damaging effects of oxidation and the invasion of free radicals.

Free radicals are molecules generated by bodily cells during the natural oxidation process. An increase in free radicals can cause significant damage to the cells that are contained in soft tissues and vital organs, leading to the onset and progression of many diseases, including skin disorders. There are several types of skin disorders, the most common of which are psoriasis and eczema. These diseases, although unsightly and irritating, are not contagious.

## The Causes and Symptoms of Psoriasis

Psoriasis is a chronic skin disorder that causes skin cells to grow rapidly. The accelerated growth of new skin cells causes thick silver, white or red patches of skin. Healthy skin cells grow gradually as the skin sheds older cells. Normal skin sheds dry cells approximately every three-to-four weeks as new cells grow. Psoriasis is caused when new skin cells move rapidly to the surface of the skin within a few days rather than weeks.

Skin patches called plaques range in size and shape and may become large as they begin to form together. Psoriasis plaques generally appear on the elbows, knees, hands, scalp or lower back and buttocks. Although psoriasis is more prevalent in adults, the condition can also affect children and adolescents. Researchers have suggested that psoriasis begins due to an over-reaction of the body's immune system. Psoriasis can cause dead skin cells to build up under nail beds, leading to a separation of toenails and fingernails from their beds. Psoriasis may worsen due to climate changes, stress, infection and certain toxins or medications.

## The Causes and Symptoms of Eczema

Eczema is a common skin disease that affects people of all ages. The most common type of eczema is called atopic dermatitis. Symptoms include dry, itchy rashes, usually appearing on the back of the knees, face, hands or feet. Somewhat similar in nature to psoriasis, eczema causes affected areas of skin to become thickened, dry or scaly. Affected areas usually begin with red-colored rashes that may turn brown as the condition worsens. The cause of eczema has not been scientifically determined. Researchers indicate that the disease may be related to an over-reactive response by the body's natural immune system to any form of skin irritant including household products and skin care products.

Eczema may be hereditary, especially in families with histories of asthma or severe allergies. It is thought that disruptions in the skin barrier may allow moisture to permeate new skin cells as they reproduce and develop. Severe outbreaks of eczema can cause upper respiratory infections and gastrointestinal disorders. Eczema affects people of all ages, but is most common in young children. Childhood outbreaks of the disease usually disappear by age 10. Periodic outbreaks can continue throughout adulthood.

According to medical professionals, people diagnosed with eczema also have *Staphylococcus aureus* bacteria on skin surfaces. Internal infections or bacteria breaching the protective skin barrier may cause this. Staph bacteria can multiply rapidly when the skin barrier is compromised or broken. Fluid can accumulate under the skin, causing pus-filled patches and blisters. There is no cure for eczema and it is not contagious.

## The Role of Glutathione in the Treatment of Skin Disorders

Clinical studies have shown that boosting levels of glutathione may benefit people diagnosed with psoriasis and eczema. Glutathione helps regulate function of the immune system and actually prevents immune cells from attacking and destroying healthy cells. Immune disorders are generally caused by an abundance of T-cells in the body, whose role is to fight infections caused by bacteria, viruses and a variety of environmental toxins. When any type of disease process activates T-cells, they go into fighting mode, producing and releasing enzymes called cytokines, which play a vital role in causing tumor cell death. The undetected growth of tumor cells within the body can lead to inflammatory responses and the rapid growth of skin cells.

Chronic inflammation and an over-response of the body's immune system can severely damage and kill healthy cells, leading to the onset of multiple illnesses, as well as chronic skin conditions. As our body's most powerful and natural antioxidant, glutathione helps protect the body from diseases caused by toxins, bacteria and viruses. Low levels of glutathione are linked to the development and progression of chronic illnesses including heart conditions, cancer, eye disorders, mental illness and skin disease.

Glutathione has also been shown to boost the immune system, providing optimal protection from infection and disease. Although glutathione is prevalent in leafy green vegetables, fish and certain types of fruit, the digestive process damages many of the antioxidant properties. In skin diseases, the immune system responds to pathogens and allergens affecting cells that form the protective skin barrier. Research studies have determined that skin diseases including psoriasis and eczema are caused by cellular oxidation, which can be reduced by increasing levels of glutathione. The antioxidant effects protect most vital bodily organs, soft tissues, bones and the skin from disease caused by cellular damage.

Glutathione, known as the "master antioxidant" helps boost cellular function by providing the body with the essential proteins cysteine, glycine and glutamate acid. These proteins reduce oxidative stress, assuring maximum cellular health during the growth and development process. According to researchers, increased oxidative stress in skin cells can lead to the development of skin diseases including psoriasis, eczema and some forms of skin cancer. Scientists concluded that boosting levels of glutathione would prevent oxidant injury to cells.

If you are suffering from any type of skin disease, you may wish to discuss the use of glutathione with your dermatologist or healthcare provider. The use of glutathione supplements may prevent skin disorder outbreaks and may help control your symptoms. Before beginning a regiment of glutathione or any other combinations of antioxidants, your physician may ask about your medical history and current medication use in order to determine the safety and efficacy of this treatment.

## Reference Links

<http://www.webmd.com/skin-problems-and-treatment>

<http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/psoriasis>

<http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/eczema>

<http://glutathione.pro.com/psoriasis-glutathione/>

<http://www.native.com/jid/journal/v126/n12/full/570>

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