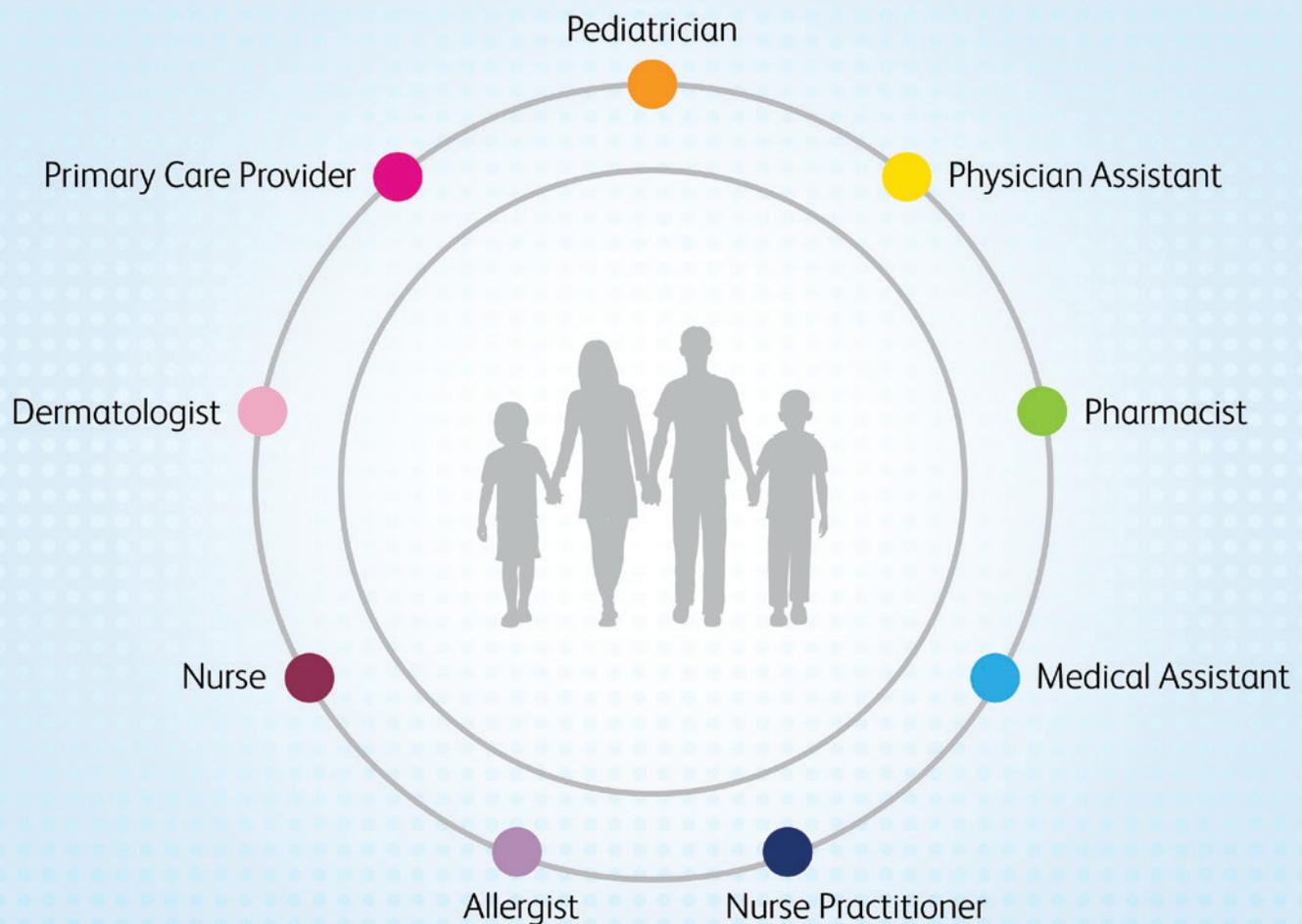


The Atopic Dermatitis Care Team Approach to Optimizing Treatment

Helpful information for patients and their caregivers



The information contained in this educational resource is intended to reinforce and supplement information you receive from your healthcare team. It is not a substitute for medical advice from your physician. If you have questions about the information you read in this educational resource, please discuss them with your healthcare provider.

This has been produced as a patient education resource by Pfizer Inc.

Let's Talk Team!

How This Information Can Help Patients With Atopic Dermatitis

Atopic dermatitis (AD)—one form of the skin disease eczema—is a complex condition.^{1,2}

It's difficult to diagnose.^{3,4} It's difficult to treat.² Most of all, it's difficult to live with—not only for patients, but also for adult caregivers who provide vital assistance to loved ones in need.

AD can be challenging physically *and* psychologically.⁵ Because the symptoms and effects of AD are so diverse, different healthcare providers (HCPs) may be required to deliver specialized care.

In short, effective treatment for the disease may require a full AD Care Team.⁶ You, as the patient or patient's caregiver, are an important part of the team.

This brochure is designed to help you work with your HCPs in managing AD. It's based on a simple principle: the more you know about AD—and the medical and lifestyle challenges associated with it—the more you'll be able to support your own medical care.⁶

The topics covered in this piece are the main ones to discuss with your **AD Care Team** as you create a formal **care plan** to advance your treatment.



AD can significantly affect your personal well-being and quality of life, particularly when physical challenges lead to emotional issues that can vary over the course of your life with the disease.⁵

The AD Care Team: Who and Why

AD is a multidimensional disease.⁶ That's why it may require multidisciplinary medical care.

HCPs in different treatment areas may play different roles in managing AD.⁶ These may include your dermatologist, allergist, primary care provider or pediatrician, nurses, nurse practitioners, and medical assistants. The pharmacist is another key member of the team.

Yet patients and caregivers should also be members of the AD Care Team.⁷ In fact, your personal involvement is important—and required.

More and more, AD treatment programs take a *personalized* approach to care that's based on your unique situation, disease severity, and ability to adhere to a treatment program.⁸

Other Medical Conditions Associated With AD

Eczema may be linked to the development of other medical problems.⁶ Working with your **AD Care Team** can help you be prepared to deal with any new issues that may arise.

For example, you should be aware of the potential for developing conditions like asthma and allergies.⁹ In fact, chances that AD may precede these conditions led to the creation of a specific term—the *atopic march*.^{10,11}

Statistics confirm the existence of the atopic march: approximately 50% of children with moderate-to-severe AD develop asthma, and approximately 75% will experience allergic rhinitis.¹¹

Patients may also develop food allergies.¹¹ Data show that up to one-third of children with AD will experience allergies related to foods such as peanuts, soy, eggs, or milk.

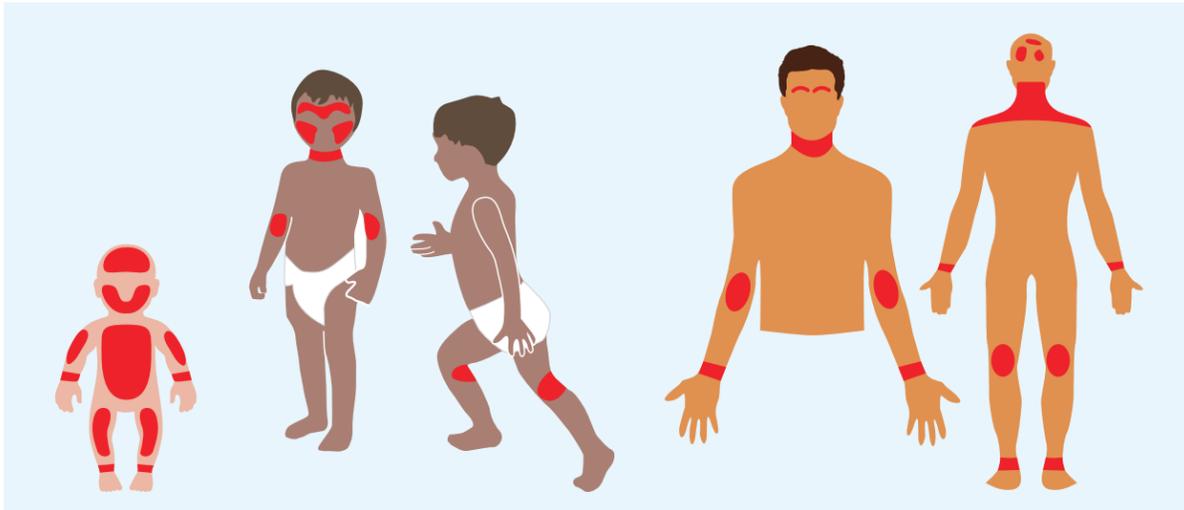
It's important to note that everyone is different; not all people with AD will experience the atopic march in the same way or with the same effects.¹²

But physical issues like these are only one obstacle posed by AD. The **AD Care Team** can also help you address the potential behavioral challenges associated with AD.⁶

The Lifelong Challenge of AD

AD is a chronic inflammatory skin disease that tends to relapse,¹⁰ meaning that it tends to return periodically. These traits point to the fact that AD is a lifelong condition that requires ongoing observation and care.

Clinical experience shows that the signs and symptoms of AD change as a patient ages¹³:



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- In infants, AD tends to appear mainly on the face, limbs, and trunk¹³
- In children (age 1-2 years and up), AD may appear on the skin on the inside of a joint that folds¹³
- In adolescents and adults, AD may appear on the wrists, ankles, and eyelids—as well as on the head, neck, and upper trunk; AD signs may also appear on the shoulders and scalp¹³

Role of the AD Patient Caregiver: Treatment Assistant and Educator

The fact that AD often affects young children—the onset of AD frequently occurs before 2 years of age¹⁴—poses several challenges to the adults who supervise their care. Caregivers help youngsters cope with AD throughout childhood. But caregivers also assume an educational role.² As children with AD grow up, they must learn to take responsibility for their own care. Caregivers are important sources of educational guidance on daily treatment requirements.

Important Treatment Topic: Applying Topical Ointments and Creams

An important part of treatment education for patients involves learning how to apply your prescribed medications (eg, topical ointment or cream).¹⁵ Your HCP will teach you how and how much medication to apply to the affected areas of the body. There is a specific unit of measurement—the FTU (fingertip unit)—that tells you how much of a topical treatment to apply depending on the patient's age and where AD signs appear on the body.²

When you understand how to correctly apply the topical ointments or creams prescribed for AD, it will help you keep to your treatment program.¹⁵



A how-to diagram for applying topical ointments—based on the FTU measurement—is available to help you determine the right amount to apply. Download your copy of the FTU form at [PersonalEmpowermentPortal.com](https://www.personalempowermentportal.com), or obtain it from your healthcare provider.

Developing the AD Care Plan

Effectively managing your AD requires keeping to your treatment program. But doing so has proven difficult for some patients.^{7,16}

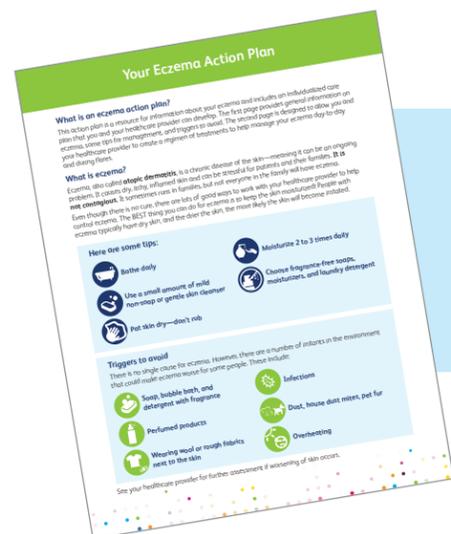
By serving as an integral member of the AD Care Team, you can work with your HCPs to develop a written care plan that's personalized to your treatment needs.^{16,17} The plan is a roadmap that can help support your ongoing treatment.

Creating the plan requires effective communication between you and members of the **AD Care Team**. That's because when HCPs understand your unique treatment issues and challenges, they can tailor the AD care plan to your personal requirements.¹⁷

What's in an AD Care Plan?

A customized **care plan** will include items that relate to your personal situation. Still, there are certain standard sections of a written plan that would pertain to any patient with eczema. These include:

- An overview of AD and its disease characteristics (eg, general patient and caregiver information)
- Basic tips on skin care
- Information on prescribed medications
- What to do in the case of an AD “flare”
- What to do when your AD progresses
- Contact information for your principal HCPs



Familiarize yourself with the components of an AD Care Plan—and start working with your HCP to develop your personal action plan

Download your copy of the *AD Care Plan* form at **PersonalEmpowermentPortal.com**, or obtain it from your healthcare provider.

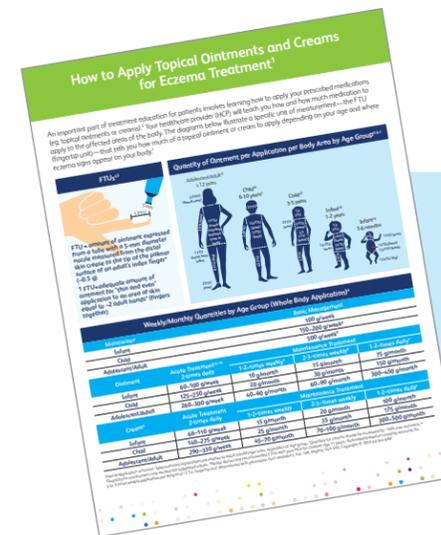
Getting Started on Your AD Care Plan

Planning tools to help you meet the health and lifestyle challenges of AD

Two planning tools are available to help you start working with your **AD Care Team**:



POEM (Patient-Oriented Eczema Measure) form,¹⁸ which was developed by the University of Nottingham for patients with eczema and/or their caregivers. The POEM tracks the symptoms of eczema and asks the patient to evaluate symptom occurrence and severity. A score is calculated, which helps you and your HCP evaluate treatment progress and make decisions regarding your care. Complete the POEM form and discuss your answers with your HCP at your next office or telehealth visit.



A how-to diagram for applying topical ointments, which is based on the FTU measurement and may help you determine the amount to apply based on the patient's age.

Download your copy of the POEM and FTU forms at **PersonalEmpowermentPortal.com**, or obtain them from your healthcare provider.

Resources to Help Patients and Caregivers

Several national groups offer resources to help patients with AD better understand and cope with the disease. Educational materials are designed for patients' use as well as for adults supervising their care.

American Academy of Dermatology

American Skin Association

Children's Skin Disease Foundation

National Eczema Association

National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases

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