



HAND DERMATITIS PROTECTION

Hand dermatitis usually results from a combination of 1) sensitive skin and 2) irritation or allergy from things your hands touch. Wet work, raw foods, detergents, solvents, glues and many other substances your hands come in contact with each day all contribute to hand dermatitis. Hand washing often worsens your hand dermatitis.

Skin protection is an important part of treatment.

Please read these instructions carefully.

1. Protect your hands from soaps, detergents and wet work by wearing waterproof, heavy-duty gloves. Vinyl gloves are better than rubber gloves, as you may become allergic to rubber. An alternative is to wear a cotton liner inside rubber gloves. Change the cotton liners as they become sweaty. Gloves should be conveniently located in the kitchen, bathrooms, laundry and hobby areas. Remember, the gloves do you no good if you don't wear them! If a glove develops a hole, discard it immediately. Wearing a glove with a hole is worse than wearing no gloves at all.
2. Vinyl gloves and washable cotton liners may be mail-ordered. Cotton gloves can also be purchased at any photography shop or at www.uline.com (cotton inspection gloves). If water or detergent splashes into gloves, replace the cotton liner with a clean liner. The liners may be washed and reused many times.
3. Wear gloves when working with raw foods, especially when squeezing and peeling citrus fruits, peeling potatoes and slicing tomatoes.
4. Dirty your gloves, not your hands! Wear cotton gloves when doing dry work and when reading the newspaper. Use heavy duty cotton gloves when gardening. When the gloves get dirty, put them in the washing machine. Wash your gloves, not your hands. Keep pairs of cotton gloves in convenient places all over the house.
5. Do laundry and dish washing by machine, not by hand. If you do not have a machine, let someone else do the washing or take special care to protect your hands with gloves and cotton liners.
6. Avoid contact with turpentine, paint thinner, paint, polishes, gasoline. If you must use them, protect your hands with vinyl or nitrile gloves and cotton liners.
7. When washing your hands, use cool water and very little mild soap (such as unscented Dove). Ivory soap is not recommended. Rinse carefully. Dry gently. All soaps and detergents are irritating. An alternative it is to use Cetaphil cleanser



without water (simply wipe on and wipe off). Alcohol-based hand sanitizers are much less drying to the skin and are very effective at cleaning and killing bacteria. However, if cracks or cuts are present in the skin, they may cause a significant burning sensation.

8. Rings often trap irritating materials beneath them. Remove rings before doing housework or washing your hands.

9. Use only the medicines and creams we prescribe. Do not use over the counter creams or home remedies. These may cause irritation or allergy.

10. In cold weather, protect your hands with cotton or leather gloves to prevent chapping. Some people become allergic to leather tanning agents or to formaldehyde resins in cottons. If you notice that gloves are making your hands worse, special testing for these allergies can be done.

11. Continue to protect your hands for several months after they have healed. Remember, you have sensitive skin.

12. At night put either a prescribed medication or a thick emollient (Cera Ve cream, Cetaphil cream, Vaseline, Aquaphor, Neutrogena Norwegian Formula) under a cotton glove liner. Use an emollient after every hand washing.

13. Run a cool mist humidifier in the bedroom.

14. It will take 2-3 months for hands to fully recover once irritants have been removed. Moisturize frequently.

Painful Cracks and Fissures

1. Zinc oxide creams can be helpful in healing these.
2. Super Glue/Krazy Glue can be used to seal these painful cracks. It often stings significantly when first applied.