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GREENBRAE

Dermatology





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continue to improve our service to you.

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October is National Eczema Awareness Month: What You Need to Know

October brings more than just falling leaves and pumpkin spice—it's also National Eczema Awareness Month. This annual observance shines a spotlight on a skin condition that affects over 31 million Americans, yet remains widely misunderstood.

Eczema isn't just dry skin or a minor irritation that goes away with some lotion. It's a chronic inflammatory condition that can significantly impact daily life, from sleepless nights due to intense itching to social anxiety about visible symptoms. Many people suffer in silence, unaware that effective treatments exist or hesitant to seek professional help.

This month provides an opportunity to learn about eczema's complexities, dispel common myths, and understand how proper medical care can transform lives. Whether you're dealing with eczema yourself or supporting someone who is, knowledge becomes your most powerful tool in managing this condition.

Understanding Eczema: More Than Just Itchy Skin

Eczema, also known as atopic dermatitis in its most common form, is a chronic inflammatory skin condition characterized by persistent itching, redness, and irritation. The term "eczema" actually encompasses several related conditions, but they all share similar symptoms and triggers.

The hallmark of eczema is the itch-scratch cycle. Affected skin becomes intensely itchy, leading to scratching that further damages the skin barrier. This creates more inflammation, more itching, and the cycle continues. The result is red, swollen, cracked, and sometimes weeping or crusted skin that can appear anywhere on the body.

Who Does Eczema Affect?

Eczema doesn't discriminate by age, gender, or ethnicity. It commonly begins in childhood—about 60% of people with eczema develop it before their first birthday. However, adult-onset eczema is also possible, and some people experience their first symptoms well into



adulthood.

The condition often runs in families and frequently occurs alongside other allergic conditions like asthma and hay fever. This connection suggests a genetic component, though environmental factors play an equally important role in triggering flare-ups.

The Hidden Impact of Eczema

Living with eczema extends far beyond physical discomfort. The visible nature of the condition can affect self-esteem and social interactions. Many people with eczema report feeling self-conscious about their appearance, leading to avoided activities or social situations.

Sleep disruption is another major challenge. The intense itching often worsens at night, leading to poor sleep quality for both patients and family members. This

lack of rest can affect work performance, school achievement, and overall quality of life.

For parents, watching a child struggle with eczema brings additional stress. The constant vigilance required to manage triggers, apply treatments, and comfort an uncomfortable child can be overwhelming.

Common Triggers and Misconceptions

Understanding eczema triggers is crucial for effective management, but identifying them can be complex. Common triggers include:

Environmental factors such as harsh soaps, detergents, fragrances, dust mites, pet dander, and certain fabrics. Weather changes, particularly cold, dry

conditions, can also worsen symptoms.

Stress plays a significant role in eczema flares. The relationship is bidirectional—stress can trigger flares, and having eczema creates stress.

Food allergies may contribute to eczema in some people, particularly children. However, food is often blamed incorrectly for eczema flares when other triggers are actually responsible.

One persistent myth is that eczema is contagious. It absolutely is not. You cannot catch eczema from someone else, nor can you spread it to others. This misconception can lead to unnecessary social isolation and discrimination.

Another common belief is that eczema is simply poor hygiene. This is not only false but harmful. People with eczema often need to be extra careful about their skincare routine, and suggesting otherwise adds shame to an already challenging condition.

Modern Treatment Options

The landscape of eczema treatment has evolved dramatically in recent years. While there's no cure, numerous effective treatments can help people achieve clear or nearly clear skin and significantly improve their quality of life.

Topical Treatments

Moisturizers remain the foundation of



eczema care. Short cool showers with a gentle cleanser and regular use of moisturizers help repair and maintain the skin barrier, reducing the frequency and severity of flares. The key is finding products that work for your specific skin and using them consistently.

Topical corticosteroids have been the mainstay of anti-inflammatory treatment for decades. Available in various strengths, they can quickly reduce inflammation and itching during flares. However, concerns about long-term use have led to the development of newer alternatives.

Biologics

For moderate to severe eczema that doesn't respond adequately to topical treatments, systemic options are available. Biologics, which target specific parts of the immune system involved in eczema, have revolutionized treatment for many patients. These medications can provide dramatic improvement in symptoms and quality of life.

JAK Inhibitors

The pipeline for new eczema treatments continues to grow. JAK inhibitors, both topical and oral, represent an exciting new class of medications. JAK inhibitors are a type of medication that helps block the immune system's response, potentially reducing the severity of eczema. In clinical trials, JAK inhibitors have shown great promise for helping with eczema

symptoms. The benefits may include a significant reduction in the number and severity of skin lesions and a rapid reduction of itchiness. A person may notice this reduction in as little as 12 hours for topical applications and 3 days for oral doses.

UVB Light Therapy

UVB Light therapy is a light-based treatment that uses specific wavelengths of ultraviolet light to manage chronic skin conditions like psoriasis and eczema. It works by slowing the growth of affected skin cells and reducing inflammation. Treatments are quick, non-invasive and performed under medical supervision for safe, effective results. While not a cure, UV light therapy is a proven method to manage symptoms and improve the appearance and comfort of affected skin.

The Importance of Professional Care

Professional dermatological care is essential for proper eczema management. A healthcare provider can accurately diagnose the specific type of eczema, identify triggers, and develop a comprehensive treatment plan tailored to individual needs.

Signs that it's time to see a healthcare professional include widespread eczema, frequent flares despite home care, signs of infection, or significant impact on work, school, or social activities. Healthcare professionals can also help

distinguish eczema from other skin conditions that may appear similar but require different treatments. Accurate diagnosis is the first step toward effective management.

Taking Action This Awareness Month

National Eczema Awareness Month serves as a reminder that no one needs to suffer with uncontrolled eczema. If you or someone you know is struggling with persistent skin issues, professional evaluation can make a significant difference.

The goal of modern eczema treatment isn't just to manage flares when they occur—it's to prevent them from happening in the first place and maintain healthy, comfortable skin long-term. With the right approach, most people with eczema can achieve significant improvement in their symptoms and quality of life.

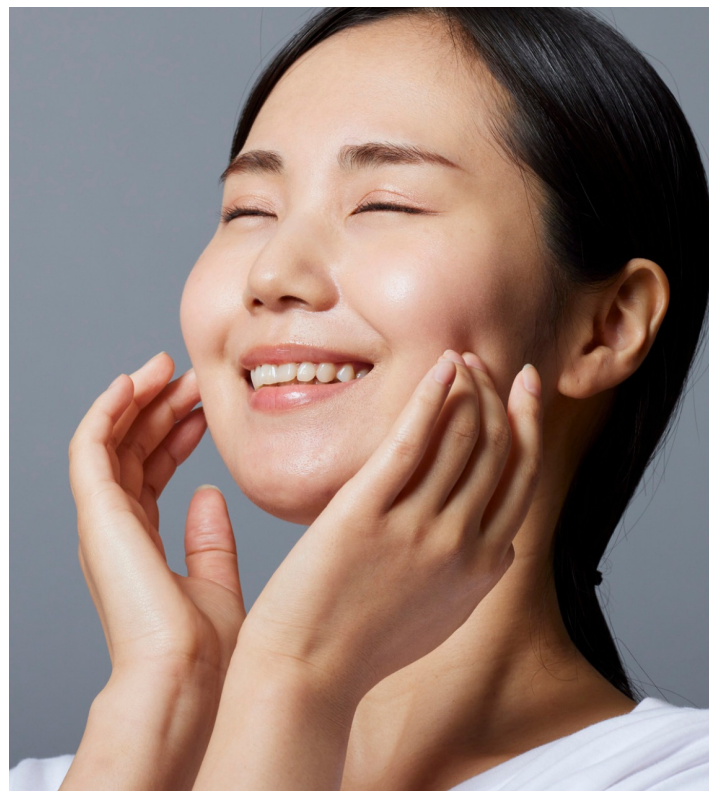
Ready to Find Relief?

Living with eczema doesn't have to mean accepting constant discomfort or limiting your activities. Effective treatments are available, and the first step is getting an accurate diagnosis and personalized treatment plan.

At Greenbrae Dermatology, we understand the complex challenges of eczema and are committed to helping patients achieve healthier, more comfortable skin. Our experienced team stays current with the latest treatment

advances and works with each patient to develop an approach that fits their lifestyle and goals.

Don't let another month pass struggling with eczema symptoms. Book an appointment at Greenbrae Dermatology today and take the first step toward clearer, more comfortable skin.





Safe and Effective Benign Skin Growth Removal Options

Have you noticed small bumps, spots, or growths appearing on your skin? You're not alone. Many adults develop benign skin growths as they age, and while these growths are typically harmless, they can cause cosmetic concerns or physical discomfort. The good news is that several safe and effective removal options are available after proper medical evaluation.

Understanding your options for benign skin growth removal can help you make informed decisions about your skin health. Whether you're dealing with skin tags, milia, seborrheic keratosis, or sun spots, professional treatment can restore your skin's smooth appearance and boost your confidence.

This comprehensive guide explores the most common types of benign skin growths and the proven removal methods available, with a focus on cryotherapy and other professional treatments that prioritize both safety and results.

What Are Benign Skin Growths?

Benign skin growths are non-cancerous formations that develop on or within the skin. Unlike malignant growths, these formations don't spread to other parts of the body or pose serious health risks. However, they can be cosmetically bothersome or occasionally cause discomfort due to their location or size.

These growths become increasingly common with age, sun exposure, and genetic predisposition. While they're generally harmless, any new or changing skin growth should be evaluated by a qualified healthcare provider to rule out more serious conditions.

Common Types of Benign Skin Growths

Skin Tags

Skin tags are small, soft pieces of hanging skin that typically appear in areas where skin rubs against skin or clothing. These flesh-colored or slightly darker growths commonly develop on the neck, armpits, groin, eyelids, and under the breasts.



Most skin tags are painless, but they can become irritated if caught on jewelry or clothing. They're more common in middle-aged and older adults, particularly those who are overweight or have diabetes.

Milia

Milia appear as small, white or yellowish bumps that typically occur on the face, especially around the eyes and cheeks. These tiny cysts form when keratin becomes trapped beneath the skin's surface.

Primary milia often develop spontaneously, while secondary milia can result from skin damage, sun exposure, or certain skincare products. They're completely harmless but can be cosmetically concerning, particularly when they appear in visible areas.

Seborrheic Keratosis

Seborrheic keratoses are among the most common benign skin growths in adults over 50. These growths appear as brown, black, or tan patches with a waxy, scaly, or warty texture. They can range from flat to raised and vary significantly in size.

Often called "age spots" or "wisdom spots," seborrheic keratoses typically appear on the chest, back, shoulders, or face. While they're completely benign, they can sometimes be mistaken for more serious conditions, making

professional evaluation essential.

Sun Spots (Age Spots)

Sun spots, also known as age spots or solar lentigines, are flat, brown or black spots that develop due to years of sun exposure. They typically appear on areas frequently exposed to sunlight, such as the face, hands, shoulders, and arms.

These spots are most common in adults over 40 and become more prevalent with age. While they're harmless, many people choose to have them removed for cosmetic reasons.

Cryotherapy: The Gold Standard for Removal

Cryotherapy represents one of the most effective and widely used methods for removing benign skin growths. This procedure uses extremely cold temperatures, typically liquid nitrogen, to destroy unwanted skin cells.

How Cryotherapy Works

During cryotherapy, liquid nitrogen is applied directly to the skin growth using a cotton swab or spray device. The extreme cold causes the cells within the growth to freeze and eventually die. Over the following days to weeks, the treated area forms a scab and eventually falls off, revealing new, healthy skin underneath.

Benefits of Cryotherapy

Precision: Cryotherapy can target specific areas without affecting surrounding healthy skin when performed by trained professionals.

Effectiveness: Most benign skin growths respond well to cryotherapy, with high success rates for complete removal.

Minimal Downtime: The procedure is quick, typically taking only a few minutes, and requires minimal recovery time.

Versatility: Cryotherapy is effective for various types of benign skin growths, including skin tags, seborrheic keratoses, and sun spots.

Taking the Next Step Toward Clearer Skin

Benign skin growth removal doesn't have to be a source of anxiety or uncertainty. With proper professional evaluation and appropriate treatment methods like cryotherapy, you can safely and effectively address these common skin concerns.

If you're considering benign skin growth removal, schedule a consultation with one of our healthcare providers at Greenbrae Dermatology. They can evaluate your specific situation, discuss treatment options, and develop a personalized plan that meets your needs and expectations. Remember, investing in professional care today can prevent complications and ensure the best possible outcomes for your skin health.



Rediscover Your Natural Radiance with Sculptra

In today's world of aesthetic treatments, the quest for youthful skin that feels natural is more prevalent than ever. Among the myriad of options available, Sculptra stands out as a groundbreaking solution designed to help you achieve skin that feels like you again. This innovative biostimulatory injectable is not just about smoothing wrinkles; it's about revitalizing your natural collagen production for long-lasting results. Whether you're new to cosmetic treatments or exploring new ways to maintain your skin's vitality, understanding Sculptra can be a game-changer in your skincare regimen.

What is Sculptra and How Does It Work?

Sculptra is an FDA-approved injectable that stimulates your skin's own natural

collagen production. Unlike other dermal fillers that provide immediate volume by adding substances beneath the skin, Sculptra works gradually over time. It contains poly-L-lactic acid (PLLA), a biodegradable substance that encourages the body to rebuild lost collagen. This process not only restores fullness to facial features but also enhances skin texture, providing a subtle and natural-looking rejuvenation.

The magic of Sculptra lies in its ability to work from within, promoting your body's intrinsic healing mechanisms. Over a series of treatments, typically spaced several weeks apart, Sculptra helps restore the structural integrity of your skin. This gradual transformation means results are subtle yet profound, unfolding over time for a refreshed and youthful appearance without the "overdone" look.

The Benefits of Collagen Stimulation

Collagen is a key protein that maintains the skin's firmness and elasticity. As we age, collagen production naturally decreases, leading to sagging skin and the formation of wrinkles. Sculptra addresses this by directly stimulating collagen growth, offering several benefits beyond traditional fillers.

Firstly, the results are long-lasting. While many fillers require frequent touch-ups, Sculptra's effects can last up to two years, making it a cost-effective option over time. Secondly, because it

works gradually, Sculptra provides a more natural enhancement, allowing you to maintain your unique facial expressions and character. Finally, by enhancing collagen production, Sculptra not only fills wrinkles but also improves overall skin quality, leaving it smoother and more resilient.

Who Can Benefit from Sculptra?

Sculptra is an ideal choice for individuals seeking a natural-looking rejuvenation without resorting to surgery. It's particularly beneficial for those experiencing age-related volume loss in areas such as the cheeks, temples, and jawline. It's also suitable for those who have noticed a decline in skin elasticity and firmness, or who wish to prevent further aging signs proactively.

That said, Sculptra is not limited to older adults. Younger individuals can also benefit from its preventive properties, using it to delay the onset of aging signs. Furthermore, because Sculptra encourages the body to produce its



own collagen, it's a versatile treatment that can be tailored to a wide range of skin types and cosmetic goals.

The Sculptra Treatment Process

The Sculptra treatment process begins with a thorough consultation with a qualified healthcare provider. During this session, your provider will assess your skin concerns, discuss your aesthetic goals, and develop a personalized treatment plan. This ensures that the results align with your expectations and suit your individual needs.

Sculptra is administered through a series of small injections into the deep dermis layer of the skin. The procedure typically takes about 30 to 60 minutes, depending on the areas being treated. To minimize discomfort, your provider may apply a topical anesthetic. Following the injections, it's crucial to massage the treated areas regularly over the next few days to ensure even distribution of the product.

What to Expect After Sculptra

Post-treatment, you might notice some immediate swelling or redness, but this typically subsides within a few days. Unlike other fillers, you won't see immediate results from Sculptra. Instead, improvements will become noticeable over the following weeks as your body gradually produces more collagen.

Patients often appreciate the gradual

enhancement, as it allows for a more natural transition in appearance. Typically, optimal results are achieved after a series of three or more sessions spaced several weeks apart. The cumulative effect is a naturally rejuvenated appearance that can last up to two years, providing both immediate and enduring benefits.

Sculptra vs. Other Dermal Fillers

When comparing Sculptra to other dermal fillers, the most significant difference lies in its mechanism of action. Traditional fillers instantly add volume by inserting hyaluronic acid or other substances under the skin. While these can provide immediate results, they do not address the underlying cause of volume loss, which is the depletion of collagen.

Sculptra, on the other hand, works with your body to stimulate its own collagen production. This means that while the initial effects aren't seen immediately, the results are longer-lasting and more natural. Additionally, because Sculptra enhances overall skin quality, it offers comprehensive rejuvenation rather than simply filling lines and wrinkles.

Safety and Effectiveness of Sculptra

Safety is a paramount concern when considering any cosmetic treatment. Sculptra has been extensively studied and proven to be both safe and effective. Its active ingredient, poly-L-lactic

acid, has been used in medical applications for decades due to its biocompatibility and biodegradability.

Common side effects include swelling, redness, and tenderness at the injection site, all of which are temporary. More serious complications are rare but can be mitigated by choosing an experienced practitioner. When performed by a qualified professional, Sculptra offers a reliable and effective way to enhance your skin's natural beauty.

Maintaining Your Results with Sculptra

Once you've achieved your desired results with Sculptra, maintaining them involves a combination of proper skincare and lifestyle choices. Protect your

skin from sun damage by wearing sunscreen daily, as UV exposure can accelerate collagen breakdown. Incorporate a moisturizer and retinoid into your skincare routine to keep your skin hydrated and promote cell turnover.

Additionally, consider periodic maintenance treatments with Sculptra to sustain your results. Your healthcare provider can guide you on the optimal timing for touch-ups based on your individual skin response and aging process. By committing to a comprehensive skincare regimen, you can enjoy the benefits of Sculptra for years to come.

Sculptra offers a unique approach to facial rejuvenation by leveraging your body's natural processes to restore youthful vitality. For those seeking a natural-looking solution to aging, Sculptra provides gradual, long-lasting results that enhance more than just appearance—they renew confidence. Whether you're looking to reverse the signs of aging or maintain a youthful glow, Sculptra presents a promising option.

If you're interested in exploring what Sculptra can do for you, consult with one of our qualified healthcare providers at Greenbrae Dermatology to tailor a treatment plan that suits your needs. Remember, radiant, youthful skin that feels like you again is just a step away, and Sculptra could be the key to unlocking that transformation.

