

CHRONICLE PATIENT PRIMER

A tool for patient counselling and adherence. Online at www.derm.city/primer

CAUSES

The severity and symptoms of xerosis can depend on your general



health



age

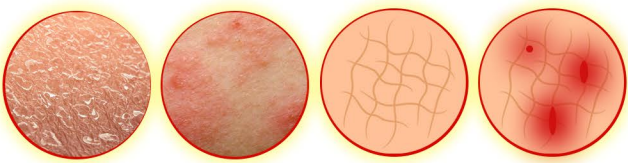


& other factors
such as time
of year

For instance, dry skin can become more prevalent during the winter months, especially in areas with mild climates. Living in an arid, low moisture area may contribute to dry skin. Elderly patients often experience dry skin at a higher rate.

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE

Xerosis may appear as **rough skin** that is grey or ashy. It may also appear as fine lines or **crack** that can be deep and, in some more serious cases, **bleed**. Redness may be present as well.



WHAT IT FEELS LIKE

Symptoms of xerosis can include a feeling of skin tightness. This feeling of tightness may be exacerbated by soaking in warm water. Sometimes xerosis is accompanied by itching, flaking, scaling or peeling. Let your doctor know if these symptoms begin to interrupt normal life, such as interfering with your sleeping patterns.



WHAT IT FEELS LIKE



To determine the proper treatment going forward, your doctor will usually **examine your skin** and ask you a series of questions, such as when the problem began. Other skin issues such as **atopic dermatitis** can cause xerosis, so a medical history is also important step in forming a diagnosis.



XEROSIS

OVERVIEW

Though it has what may seem like an unfamiliar medical name, xerosis is known most simply as dry skin. The majority of cases of xerosis can be treated with lifestyle changes or home remedies, but there are instances for which you should talk to your doctor. Those cases include when no improvements are seen after trying at-home remedies and lifestyle changes, if the dryness turns into open sores, or if there is excessive skin peeling. In most cases, however, xerosis manifests as rough skin that may feel itchy or that may crack and be painful. This can be a temporary condition or may be chronic.

TREATMENT

Without treatment, xerosis can become more serious, so it is best to follow your doctor's treatment instructions. Treatment options range from changes in your daily habits to moisturizers and immune modulators for the most serious cases.

LIFESTYLE

Try to limit exposure to warm water as well as soaps and detergents that are designed to eliminate oil. These can be harsh on the skin. Central heating in your home may also be a risk factor for dry skin.



MOISTURIZERS

For dry skin a moisturizing cream is often recommended. Your doctor may suggest an ointment, cream, lotion or oil-based product on his or her diagnosis. Moisturizers that contain urea or lactic acid can be helpful for very dry skin.



MEDICATED THERAPIES

In many cases, proper moisturization is enough, but some severe cases of xerosis may require medicated treatments. A physician may prescribe a topical corticosteroid or an immune modulator such as a topical calcineurin inhibitor, especially if itching is involved or if you have swelling. These therapies may sometimes be used in conjunction with other over-the-counter moisturizers.



SOURCES

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<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/dry-skin/symptoms-causes/syc-20353885?page=0&citems=10>

