



SEBORRHEIC DERMATITIS

DEFINITION

Seborrheic dermatitis is a common, chronic disorder of the skin characterized by peeling and flaking of the scalp (often referred to as dandruff). It can also lead to redness and oily scaling of the eyebrows, sides of the nose, ears, and central chest. In rare instances, it can also affect the groin and arm pits.

The cause of seborrheic dermatitis is unknown. It is not contagious, has no allergic causes, and is not related to skin cancer. There may be a hereditary component and seasonal changes and emotional factors can aggravate the condition. Having an “oily complexion” and applying oil-based makeup and moisturizers will worsen the condition.

TREATMENT

Although seborrheic dermatitis can be controlled, it cannot be totally cured. With the proper use of a medicated shampoo and a medicated spray, lotion, cream, or gel, it should be manageable without close professional supervision. The medications prescribed should be applied regularly (at night or twice daily) when the seborrhea is flaring and used infrequently or not at all when the condition is clear. Overuse of cortisone medicines may be associated with side effects including acne, red shiny spots on the skin, and very rarely visual problems when applied excessively around the eyes. Because of this, appropriate appointments need to be scheduled to recheck for side effects while on extended periods of use.

The most important thing to understand about treatment and control is the variability of the process. There are active phases when the shampoo and cortisone preparations may be necessary on a daily basis and inactive phases when weekly use of shampoo will be adequate. Another point to remember is that some medications that work well for some people don't work well for others. Also, patients with seborrhea can still develop other conditions. Therefore, if the medications do not control your symptoms, or if the medicines which previously worked now fail to give you relief of symptoms, please make a return appointment.

Over-the-counter shampoos that work well for dandruff will contain tar, pyrithione zinc, selenium sulfide, or salicylic acid. In some cases, prescription shampoos may also be helpful.

<u>Over-the-counter</u>	<u>Prescription</u>
DHS Tar Gel	Nizoral
Neutrogena T Gel/TSal	Olux
Nizoral	Clobex
Aveeno Anti-Dandruff	Salex
Head & Shoulders	Loprox
DHS Zinc	Capex
Zincon	Xolegel
Selsun/Selsun Blue	Topicort

