**Juvenile Spring Eruption**

As the name suggests, this is common in children in the Spring months. It is due to sunlight exposure and will cause bumpy fluid filled spots on the sun exposed parts of the ears. These may later break down and form scabs or dry skin. Children whose ears are not protected by hair, hats or sunblock are more at risk. The condition is often quite itchy and may make lying on your side in bed at night uncomfortable. Treatment is with moisturisers and steroid creams. It should settle within 2 weeks.

**Which factor sunblock?**

SPF 50

**Which Moisturiser?**

It probably does not matter for most. Remember you cannot overdose on moisturiser. It is designed to be inert. The main issue we see with patients and moisturisers is that they do not use enough. Use at least 3 times a day. But if you can use it more…go for it.

Suggested moisturisers: Zerobase, Aqueous, Cetraben, E45 and Diprobase are all good.

**Can I buy over the counter steroid creams?**

Hydrocortisone is available over the counter often used for stings and bites. It is best to consult your doctor first though, to confirm the diagnosis. Prolonged use steroid cream can have negative consequences on your skin, such as thinning.

**Polymorphic Light Eruption**

This is very similar to Juvenile Spring Eruption. It affects any sun exposed areas of skin, such as the face, arms, shoulders and chest. The skin appearances differ from person to person. It is usually a red rash and will likely be bumpy in parts with small fluid filled blisters. It can occur in children or adults but is more common in those in their 20’s and 30’s. Treatment is much the same as for Juvenile Spring Eruption, with a moisturiser and steroids. High factor sun block should be applied to the area whilst it is settling and using it in the future will prevent the problem from returning.
Heat rash / Prickly Heat

This may look quite similar to a Light Eruption, but the difference is that this is not due to sunlight exposure. It is instead related to heat. Commonly affected areas are the face, neck, chest and arms. If the area is itchy, using an antihistamine tablet available at your local pharmacy without a prescription may help. Try to remain cool, by taking off layers of clothes where appropriate. As this is more common in newborns and toddlers and affects above the waist, try and let them go topless where possible.

Which anti-histamine?

There is no clear evidence that any one antihistamine is better than another. So choose the cheapest one. Most are available from your pharmacist without a prescription.

Anti-histamines: Loratadine, Cetirizine, Fexofenadine.

Hot Tub folliculitis

This is common in people using hot tubs, pools, lakes and ponds, especially where appropriate disinfectants such as chlorine have not been used. This occurs because the water becomes contaminated with bacteria. It presents with yellow raised spots, and these are often itchy. This will require a review from your doctor. Antibiotics either in the form of a cream or a tablet are often necessary. Scrubbing the affected area with a decent antiseptic skin cleanser is a good idea. This problem is very contagious so make sure you avoid close physical contact or shared towels.
What is an antiseptic?
Do you remember when you grazed your knee and your mum cracked out the Dettol? This is an antiseptic. It acts as a disinfectant. Any will do, best to check with your local pharmacist.

Common antiseptics: Dettol, Hibiscrub, Iodine scrub. Soap and water would be another option if that is all you have, but remember, soap can dry your skin out, and some people’s skin will be highly sensitive to this approach.

Swimmer’s Ear

You would be forgiven for assuming this is a condition of the ear, but in fact, this is more of a problem with the skin in the ear canal. People who swim a lot or allow water to get in their ears will be at increased risk of this problem. Often the first symptom is itching as the skin become dry. Later it may smell or discharge creamy fluid. The mainstay of treatment is to keep your ears dry. Avoid using cotton buds to scratch inside the ear however tempting this may be. Olive oil drops when symptoms are mild might be enough to moisturise the skin and relieve the itch. The olive oil you have in your house should suffice. If symptoms are severe then you may require a medicated ear drop from your doctor. If this is your first case of this problem, consulting your doctor for a look inside your ear is essential, to ensure no other problems are at play. With time, prevention will become the cure for those who repeatedly get these symptoms. Those at risk are those who love to be in the water. So swimmers and surfers beware!