

13 July 2006

By: Alexandra Lupu, Health News Editor



## [Skin Allergies During Summer](#)

*Sensitive skin is extremely exposed to all types of allergies during the hot season. Learn how to prevent or treat them*

Generally, allergy is a chronic disease that appears in sensitive people as an overreaction of the immune system to inhaled, injected or ingested substances. Non-allergic individuals do not exhibit any response to these factors. During summer all types of allergies can occur: skin allergies, food allergies, chemical allergies, inhalant (airborne outdoor or indoor) allergies, insect allergies etc. But the most popular during the hot season is the summer skin rashes caused by overexposure to sun or heat, outdoor allergies, insect biting (mosquitoes or horseflies) etc. Skin allergies, medically termed "allergic contact dermatitis" occur mostly in summer because this is the time when all types of allergenic factors and particles are over-spread outdoors and indoors. People with sensitive skin often get skin allergies as a consequence of the epidermis coming into contact with allergens. The skin allergies can be divided into atopic dermatitis, contact dermatitis, allergy to cosmetics, fragrances or nickel, photo sensitivity, hives urticaria etc. The symptoms of skin allergies usually occur shortly after the body contacts the allergen, within no more than 48 hours. Common symptoms of the skin allergies consist of redness, blistering, itching, swelling of the skin that affect the epidermis under the form of rashes, hives, eczemas etc. Rash caused by exposure to sun, or sun rash, affects mostly fair skinned people who develop small red blisters or spots that appear on areas of the skin that have been exposed to sunlight. Sun rash is extremely itchy and can be prevented by using a high sun protection factor sun screen while in the sun. Photo allergy also affects people taking sunbathes during summer, but this appears as an adverse reaction of the skin to chemical substances in cosmetics, perfumes, soaps, sun lotions etc. Therefore, when exposed to sun rays the skin develops rash if one comes into contact with chemicals. Over sensitivity to drugs and all kinds of medication can also occur when exposing in the sun. For example, some people can manifest adverse reactions if taking antibiotics, blood pressure medication, birth control pills etc and then exposing under the sun rays. Another common rash is miliaria, known by most of us under the name of prickly heat. This appears on the sensitive skin due to prolonged perspiration on the epidermis. Summer allergy can also be caused by outdoor allergen such as grass pollen, weed pollen or mold spores. The allergy caused by these factors is called airborne outdoor allergy. This type of summer allergy is tightly linked with the plant rash that can develop from coming into contact with ivy and poison ivy, poison sumac, poison oak, daffodils, ginkgo tea fruit, primrose, nettles, alyssum etc. If you want to treat a rash the first rule is not to scratch it because it will get worse and may need medications afterwards. Most of the times, rashes go away without any type of treatment. However, if one develops more serious symptoms, the person should see a physician. Herbal treatments are also very beneficial against rash: lime juice, sandal wood, rose water, poppy seeds. The intake of leafy vegetables or fruits such as plums, melons, oranges, apples, grapes can ameliorate skin allergy symptoms, too.