Why Summer Flare-Ups Get Worse

So it's July now and back in April your child's skin might have been doing okay and then May hit and it got more than a little dry here and there. It got very red and very angry and as the heat has amped up, it's getting worse and worse, and now you're waking up to scratched raw skin and sweaty naps and a kid who's miserable by 4 p.m.

every day and I hear this same sentence over and over from parents this time of year. It's got to be the heat, right? And the humidity. And then it'll calm down once fall comes.

I used to think that too, because this is what I want to talk about today, and I think it's going to change the way that you think about the whole season that is summer.

he isn't actually the cause of what's happening. It's just the thing that's finally showing you what was already there. And I want to talk about this specifically right now because we still have a real window before school starts.

What you do these next few weeks, this next month, matters so much for how your child walks into the next school year or the daycare year. So let's get into it.

Is your child struggling with itchy nights and endless flare ups? I'm Andrea McHugh, mom of four and host of Eczema Kids. Here you'll find natural solutions that actually work so you can heal your childhood eczemat without steroids, without the overwhelm, and finally see calm, healthy skin again.

Let's get into it. Honestly, it makes perfect sense why people default into blaming heat. The timing lines up and skin gets worse in May, June, July, August, and it's the easiest explanation because no deeper digging is required.

And even most pediatricians will say, just keep them cool, keep him out of the sun and send you on your way. I get it and I used to believe it too. And my own kids' worst flares historically lined up with the summer every single year.

Trigger vs Root Cause

And for a long time, I chalked it up to sweat and pool days and just figured we'd have to white-knuckle it till fall, which wasn't any better, by the way.

The distinction that I want you to walk away with today is there's a difference between a trigger and a root cause. And a trigger is something that provokes a reaction in a system that's already primed to react.

It's all ready very hyperactive. The sweat, the chlorine, humidity, sun exposure, dehydration, those are triggers. And the root cause is the actual underlying imbalance that made the system reactive in the first place.

That's the dysbiosis, that the immune dysregulation, and that is poor detox pathways, nutrient deficiency. Those are the root causes. And you can think about it like a smoke detector that's going off.

It's not caused by the button that you pressed to make it go off, to test it. The button reveals the system that is already wired to respond. That the heat is the buttons and the cause is wiring underneath.

So I want to talk about that wiring for a minute. If you caught my conversation last week with Dr. Rob Silverman, you heard him talk this idea that eczema isn't really a skin condition, and we say that around here all the time.

The skin is the messenger, so it's telling you something deeper is going on. in the gut, right? The outer skin is a mirror of what's going on in your intestinal lining, your inner skin, and that is tied to inflammation.

And when digestion and liver function and lymph flow are already backed up, the skin becomes the overflow valve.

So good news, this stuff is coming out versus being trapped inside, Bad news is it's not coming through the proper detox channels.

So in our eczema friends cases, the body is dumping the toxins out to the skin because it can't process it anywhere else. It can process how it is designed to process.

the everyday toxins that all of us come in contact with. And the piece that is helpful to understand in summer specifically is that he isn't just another stressor on top.

It actually amplifies the inflammation that's already there because he raises histamine release and it increases blood flow to the skin.

How Heat Amplifies Eczema

So if there's inflammation in the body, heat makes it more visible and more itchy and reactive. It amplifies it. Not just additive, it's multiplicative.

And it is like a dimmer switch that's already partly on. So in cool weather, that same level of internal inflammation might show up as just a little bit of dryness.

Because in summer, the exact level can look like full-blown flare because the heat just turned that dimmers switch way up. So when you layer summer on top of an already inflamed system, here's what's actually happening.

More sweating means more irritants sitting on the skin. And it also means, more mineral loss, especially zinc and magnesium. Our little kiddos, because of the dysbiosis, and because how hard their body is trying to fight to be well, they're already deficient in these minerals, friends.

One, we're not getting what we need from the food. Two, their bodies aren't doing a well enough job. extracting those minerals from the food that they're eating.

So this is like a one, two, three punch on their delicate little systems. And your skin barrier really, really needs these nutrients. Then pool time means chlorine exposure, which is more chemical load on a detox system that's already working over time.

Sun and heat mean more inflammatory load and more dehydration. Now, as we just talked about, this amplified histamine response on top of it. And then there's the diet shift.

Summer a lot of times means more treats and more travel food and less routine and one of those ultra processed snacks because you're running around doing all the fun things and you want to show up at every pool party and backyard barbecue and there is barbecue everything and none of these things actually cause eczema in a healthy balanced system.

They only become a problem and heat only becomes a flare when the terrain underneath is already very, very inflamed. So if you're already in this cycle and you are doing more showers or more steroids or just more indoor time and your keeping your child inside during the peak heat and maybe even avoiding the pool altogether, avoiding get togethers altogether.

You're not doing anything wrong. I mean these things genuinely can help in the moment. And I did a lot of those things too, but those strategies manage the output and they don't address the input.

And it's also denying your family of joy and also a good for your child, physically, mentally, emotionally, right? And that's why a lot of families feel like summer is just survival mode every single year.

And you grit your teeth through June, July, and August, you see everyone else living the life during these three months.

Summer Support Strategies

It makes it even extra hard. Then fall comes and things thankfully cool down. and everyone takes a breath and a sigh of relief. But unfortunately, nothing was resolved underneath.

And so then next summer, this happens again, and then maybe it even extends out into more months because the extended pollen season, because it's getting hotter and hotter.

I mean, you're just getting a same cycle, but it doesn't even feel like a cycle anymore because then it just starts to extend throughout your whole year, right?

Every year. And I talked to parents constantly in June and July and they feel like they're completely starting over. Like all the progress from last year vanished, that they got it managed over the winter and now they have to completely start over and it didn't vanish.

It just, the underlying issue was just sitting there dormant since last summer and then it's waiting for the right trigger to show back up again. So I want to give you a couple of things that you can start doing right now, mid-July, that will genuinely help with your child's skin and their comfort levels.

So simple food-based sources for these nutrients are pumpkin seeds. Those are amazing. You can grind them or chew them. whole. Leafy greens are wonderful.

Ideally, cook them just in a saute pan with ghee, just to make them a little bit more digestible. And then quality mineral salt. You can put it in water, you can it on their food.

Our bodies need sodium. It's an essential mineral, and don't be scared about them eating too much sodium, as long as you're not eating a diet full of highly processed foods, which I know you are not.

If you here, I knew you were doing everything that you possibly can to fix it. Second, you'd want to deal with hydration. I mean, real hydration, not just drink more water.

You want electrolyte rich foods. This is nature's antidote to the heat and the humidity that's going on right now. So cucumbers, watermelons, coconut water, Ideally not the coconut water in the plastic bottles, because BPAs and all the things.

So get the ones in paper containers or the cans. I also just came across this electrolyte company called Short Story. Not sponsored by them in any way, but I really, really like it.

It tastes like lemonade. it doesn't have any citric acid or questionable ingredients. And I just highly, highly recommend it, I love it! So I started buying that for my own kids and you can get that online.

And you're going to want to pay attention to timing, just getting fluids in before and after outdoor time, not just whenever they remember to ask for a drink.

My kids will never ask a for drink, and I know it looks ridiculous because I carry five water bottles for the four kids and myself everywhere, I'm always asking them to drink water, but hopefully it's melon.

making a difference in their overall health. I have to believe it is. And using an herbal oil before a bath or shower just infuses the skin and the tissues with anti-inflammatory herbs and antimicrobial herbs, cooling herbs.

The herbs in the eczema kits Herbal oil is formulated specifically for eczema and these are like the skin loving herbs that really, really do move the dial.

And it also protects their skin from the water, from chlorine, and from a whole host of summer.

A Window to Reset Before School

issues and I cannot recommend adding it into these hot, dry summer months enough. So do those four things that will help your child out tremendously. But I do want to be honest with you about them.

These tips will get through the next few weeks, but they won't resolve the underlying issue that takes addressing what's actually going on internally.

What I want all of you to take away from this episode is your child's body isn't malfunctioning in the summer, it's communicating very clearly, very loudly, and you're seeing what's been true all along.

And that's genuinely good news because it means that this isn' t some unsolvable mystery. It's not something that you have to just grit your teeth and deal with every June, July, August, probably May and September for the next several years of their childhood.

Cross your fingers, ideally, right? And really good news, friends, we have some laid back, less structured time before school starts to implement new things and new routines and learn some new So we can eventually overcome this disease and eradicate it from our lives and our child's lives forever, right?

And if we start now, there's this real window to get your child skin calm before everything changes, before the schedule changes before new classroom exposures, new daycare exposurs, Before the new stress of a new routine adds one more layer on top of everything else that the body is already managing.

And I just want to reassure you that this is a really, really good time. You don't have to wait for a better time, this IS the better right now before the mid-late August craziness.

This is exactly the work that we do inside the eczema elimination program, friends. We get to actually uncover what's going on underneath for your specific child and then address it.

Holy, fully, thoroughly, so that next summer you are diving into that pool and you're going on the vacations and You're living the life and I want your child to walk into the next school year with calm, settled skin instead of starting the year in a flare-up and possible staph infection and impetigo, right?

And if you are ready to stop managing this and ready get to the root of it, book an alignment call. Friends, it's free. The link is in the show notes and we'll talk about what's really going on for your child and what can happen before the bells start to ring in August.

And thank you for being here and I will talk to you next week. Take care. Thank you, for helping with my eczema. Love you. Thank you for listening today, friend.

I know healing your child's skin isn't easy, but you're doing it one smart step at a time. If this episode gave you a little hope or a better night's sleep, leave a quick review so more exhausted parents can find eczema kids and finally rest easy too.

Follow, share, and let's help more kids heal. Take care.