

#### **HYPERSENSITIVITY REACTION**

A hypersensitivity reaction is a medical term used to describe a type of allergic reaction. The problem usually appears as red areas on the body, which may be widespread. At times it may appear as hives, dry scaling areas, or even blisters. The eruption may be relatively localized or may involve almost the entire skin surface. Often times these hypersensitivity reactions cause a significant amount of itching and this is often the reason people seek medical attention besides the appearance of the eruption.

Two of the more common causes of an allergic hypersensitivity reaction are an infection, such as a virus, or a drug reaction. A drug reaction may be due to any medication, including aspirin, vitamins, herbal products or various supplements. It is possible that you have been taking the medication for a while and the eruption is delayed, however, it is often caused by a medication that you have started recently. There are many other possible causes of hypersensitivity reactions. I will try to determine these various causes based on the information you supply in your history.

In treating this condition the first goal is to eliminate any possible causes. If there is a suspicion that a medication may be the cause, the medication should be stopped immediately. In many cases if it is felt to be an infection, the infection itself may have already passed and no specific intervention is required. If there is a concern regarding any kind of active infection, medication may be prescribed.

In many cases it may be impossible to find a specific cause. These seem to be one time eruptions which often are caused by a combination of circumstances. In these situations it is quite unusual for there to be a recurrence of these circumstances so it is usually a single event and highly unlikely to recur.

In general the treatment for a hypersensitivity reaction is designed at relieving the symptoms. One of the major symptoms may be itching. This may be treated with various topical medications, oral medications or an injection. The treatment will be determined based on your symptoms and the type of eruption.

Normally, these types of eruptions will subside relatively quickly. I would suggest that you try to taper off the oral medication or the topical medication as the condition improves. That is, use the products less frequently as your condition improves.

In general, a hypersensitivity reaction can be easily treated and hopefully will not recur. In certain ways this type of problem is like sunburn. If a person comes to my office with sunburn it is too late from one standpoint because the skin is already red and tender. The medication that I prescribe will help relieve the symptoms and hopefully allow the problem to clear up quicker. In general it won't recur unless there is a specific allergen that you come in contact with again.

If you have any other questions regarding this condition, please ask me before you leave the office.