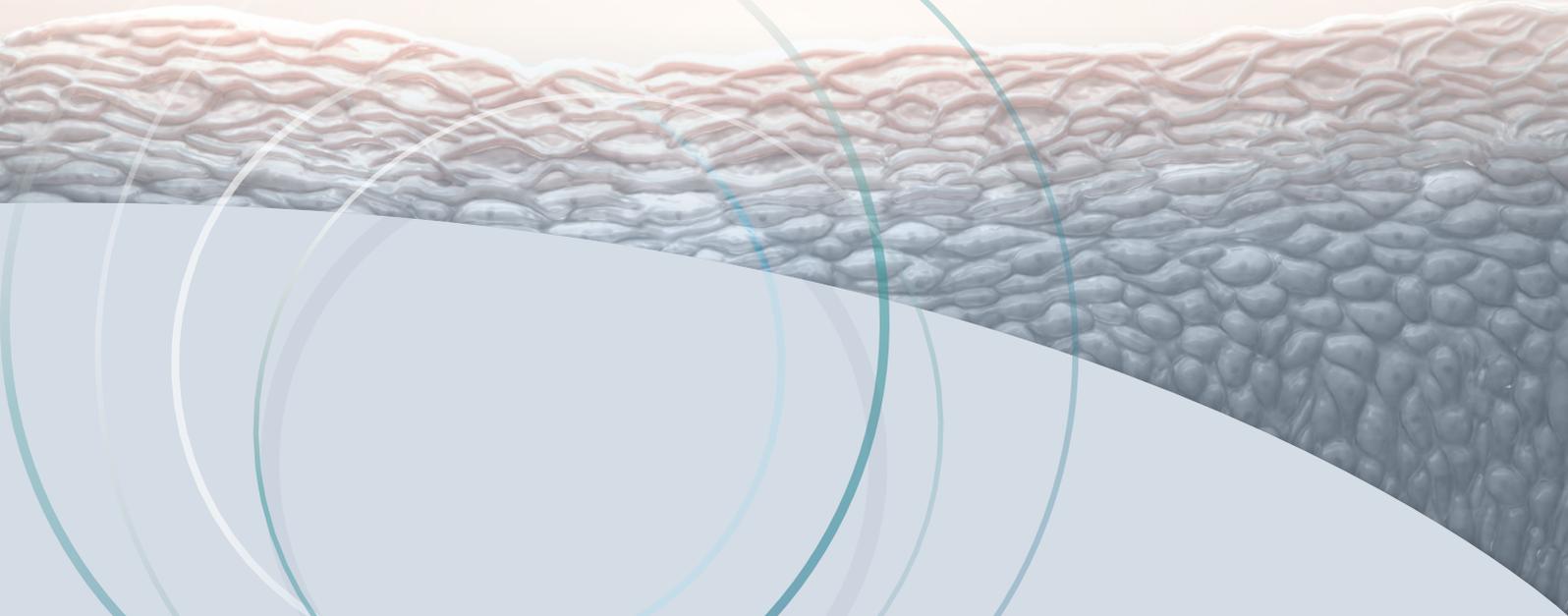




EUROPEAN ACADEMY OF
DERMATOLOGY AND VENEREOLOGY

Information Leaflet for Patients

A detailed illustration of a cross-section of human skin. The top layer is the epidermis, showing a wavy, textured surface. Below it is the dermis, which contains a network of blood vessels and a layer of cells. The bottom part of the illustration is a smooth, light blue gradient. Overlaid on this illustration are several overlapping, semi-transparent circles in shades of blue and white, creating a modern, scientific feel.

CHRONIC PRURIGO

The aim of this leaflet

This leaflet is designed to help you learn more about chronic prurigo.

CHRONIC PRURIGO

What is chronic prurigo?

Chronic prurigo is a rare skin disease resulting from a severe itch-scratch cycle. Typical symptoms are itch (medical term: pruritus) longer than six weeks and repeated scratching resulting in itchy scratch lesions. Chronic prurigo can severely impact patients' quality of life and lead to sleep disturbances and mental illness.

Who is affected by chronic prurigo?

People of all ages, including children and the elderly, can have chronic prurigo. The elderly happen to constitute the largest patient group.

What can cause chronic prurigo?

Dermatological, neurological, systemic and psychiatric diseases often cause chronic prurigo. It is also known to be a side effect of several medications.

How is chronic prurigo diagnosed?

Itch lasting longer than six weeks and the presence of itchy lesions can hint towards the presence of chronic prurigo. For physicians, the top goal should be to discover the underlying etiology. They should take a structured clinical history of the affected patient and conduct a physical examination. Laboratory tests can be recommended to try to learn more about

the cause for the pruritus, including skin biopsies and blood tests, and even radiology examinations (ultrasounds, x-rays).

How is chronic prurigo treated?

Special medications can be used to interrupt the transmission of itch, including gabapentinoids, antidepressants or immunomodulating agents. A multimodal therapy, such as an intensive local therapy, is just as important to consider. It is crucial to use moisturizing, replenishing creams and specific topical therapies on dry skin.

What is practical advice for taking care of chronic prurigo?

- Use moisturizing creams daily to avoid dry skin.
- Do not take long, hot baths and do not use drying soaps. Take short showers instead.
- After cleansing the skin, allow it to adapt to the effects of creams and lotions.



- Wear light, breathable clothing made of non-synthetic fibers.
- Use cold wrappings instead of applying ice directly to the skin.
- Try to avoid scratching the skin, as this causes damage to it.
- Seek medical help as early as possible.
- Elevated anxiety levels can increase awareness of the presence of itch. There are societies and patient organisations that can provide more information on this.
- Seek interdisciplinary help to interrupt the itch-scratch cycle!

The medical community is aiming to provide evidence for chronic prurigo, leading to better care and management strategies for the affected patients. Treatments should intend to reduce the itch and break the itch-scratch cycle so the skin can recover, and diagnostic efforts should be made to identify the cause for chronic prurigo. Keeping the skin moist via lotions and creams can be recommended to maintain the skin's natural barrier function. ■



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While every effort has been made to ensure that the information given in this leaflet is accurate, not every treatment will be suitable or effective for every person. Your own clinician will be able to advise in greater detail.

PRODUCED BY THE EADV PRURITUS TASK FORCE