

Oils for Skin Therapy for Suffering Seniors

Kaufui V Wong* and U Miami

Professor, College of Engineering, USA

Received: July 12, 2017; Published: July 18, 2017

*Corresponding author: Kaufui V. Wong, Professor, College of Engineering, Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering Department, Florida 33146, USA, Tel: (305) 284-3314; Email: kwong@miami.edu

Abstract

Owing to aging, many senior citizens experience skin dryness which manifests as itchy skin. The itchy skin can appear suddenly without notice, and the taken-by-surprise senior may not realize what the cause of it could be. During such occasions, it is best not to scratch because it will give rise to raised welts or red rashes. These scratched areas could also provide areas for infection. Some sufferers may also be accused of having a mental health condition by less-than-kind persons. Traditional remedies include rubbing the body with curative oil like pure cold-pressed olive oil or pure cold-pressed coconut oil. The oil is then allowed to seep into the skin with its curative nutrients for a couple of hours, then the excess washed off. It is essential that the oil used in therapy be totally pure, and not hot extracted, or mixed with lower quality oils. Another blunder would be to use pure oil that has been mixed with oils from other fruits or vegetation to decrease the costs. Avocado oil is also recommended as a third possibility.

Keywords: Atopic Dermatitis; Pruritus; Xerosis; Rashes; Extra Virgin Olive Oil; Coconut Oil; Avocado Oil

Abbreviations: AD: Atopic Dermatitis

Introduction

The condition of very itchy skin, named 'pruritus', is a rather common problem in the older population and it is also an infuriating one. Anyone who has suffered the itching of a bite from an anthropoid bite should understand older people whose skin regularly itches so much they have problems sleeping at night. It is promising that help is accessible. Of course, identifying the underlying cause of the itch is important, whenever possible, to custom-make the treatment. In many situations, calming lotions may provide temporary relief. The conceivable causes for itchiness range from internal illnesses, such as kidney or liver disease, to skin rashes, allergies, and dermatitis. Tanei [1] performed a review of atopic dermatitis (AD) in the elderly, and compared it with childhood atopic dermatitis as well as adult atopic dermatitis. This is an illness branded by itching, dry skin and skin lesions. Tanei found evidence that it is an affliction of older men rather than of older women.

Tanei found that AD in older people compared to younger adults shows up as the elderly may have itching in the folds of the knees and elbows, including other parts of the body where younger adults have itching. In individuals of all ages, AD has been shown to be caused by oversensitivity to allergens in the environment that generally have no effect on others such as dust mites and pollen. In addition, milk and cheese intake may also result in atopic dermatitis. Food allergies may contribute to AD [2].

Atopic dermatitis may be caused by defects in the skin barrier, which allows germs in and moisture out [3]. Atopic dermatitis generally begins during infancy or childhood. However, it can attack people at any age, or recur in persons who had the disease in childhood. Ring et al. [4] provides a review and listing of the better known treatments for atopic dermatitis (atopic eczema). Ring et al. [4] Even included a traditional Chinese herbal remedy that uses 10 herbs. Katsarouand Armenaka [5] focuses on particular points regarding AD, in particular, dust mites.

Norman [6] discussed xerosis and pruritus in the elderly. Weisshaarand Dalgard [7] declared that academic studies show that the symptom of itch is highly prevalent. They concluded that itch should therefore receive more care from physicians and other healthcare providers. In fact, Weisshaar is a prolific researcher in the field of chronic pruritus. Weisshaar et al. [8] compiled the European guidelines to the disease. According to the Cleveland Clinic [9], dry skin in elderly people has many environmental causes that can be readily remedied. These environmental causes include unnecessary use of soaps, too many hot baths, and too hot and dry (owing to overheating) rooms in the winter and excessively air-conditioned rooms in the summer. Shingles can occur in anyone at any age. Even persons, who had chicken pox vaccination when young, may succumb to shingles at a later age (the same varicella zoster virus causes shingles as well as chicken pox) [10]. One's own

physician is best consulted to eliminate shingles as a cause of skin itch, before embarking on skin therapies which are clearly meant for less dangerous diseases. Lastly, Le, Gonski [11] discussed delusional parasitosis. This publication is merely cited for completeness of the literature search, but not quite relevant to persons suffering from 'real' itch. Reference [11] is more in the realm of mental health.

Oils

One oil that has been used successfully for psoriasis is avocado oil. Vitamin B12 cream with avocado oil is well tolerated; hence, it has substantial potential as a topical therapy for psoriasis. Commercial cosmetics containing avocado oil are available. Unlu et al. [12] performed research on the beneficial effect of including avocado and/or avocado oil in salads. They found that the lipids in avocado improved the carotenoid absorption by humans. Pure cold-pressed coconut oil has long been used as premier cooking oil for consumption in the tropical South Asia and Southeast Asia, as well as the South Pacific islands. It is also commonly used as a weekly skin and whole body treatment, especially among the senior citizens. This has been practiced for long enough to be recommended to be safe for most persons. Nevin, Rajamohan [13] studied some benefits of coconut oil consumed by rats. They found that the coconut oil lowered the lipid levels in the serum and tissues of the rats; even the LDL oxidation by physiological oxidants was lowered.

Pure olive oil, or commercially classified as extra virgin olive oil, has been consumed with salads, and used for cooking (not deep-frying because of its low smoke point) foods that are ultimately consumed. Its origin comes from around the Mediterranean Sea. Pure (extra virgin) olive oil is recommended as a therapeutic lotion for skin and hair. No mixtures of extra virgin oil (in any percentage less than 100%) are allowed. It is also the popular cooking oil recommended by nutritionists, since it is cold-pressed and most brands contain no harmful contaminants. Beauchamp et al. [14] discovered ibuprofen-like qualities in ingesting virgin olive oil (one step below 'extra virgin olive oil' in the food industry). They found that the oil had an anti-inflammatory effect, with the potency of ibuprofen. Viola and Viola [15] studied virgin olive oil as a nutritional carrier and protective agent for the skin.

Discussion and Conclusion

A mini review has been made about the problem of extremely itchy skin in the elderly. Unfortunately, some of them have been misdiagnosed as being a mental health problem; in other words that the problem only exists in the minds of the affected seniors. It is an intention of the current work to educate the populace that the diminishing of sweat and oil glands as you age also may worsen dry skin, thus producing itch. Atopic dermatitis, pruritus, or 'senior psoriasis' may be treated successfully with weekly topical application of pure oils, e.g. olive oil, coconut oil. Traditional

remedies recorded include rubbing the body with curative oil like pure cold-pressed olive oil or pure cold-pressed coconut oil. The oil is then allowed to soak into the skin with its curative nutrients for a couple of hours, and then washed off in a shower or bath. These oils should not be used on the face (recommended to be used one at a time only), for fear of a breakout of acne. It is imperative that the oil employed be cold-pressed and a hundred percent pure and not extracted using heat. Any blend of extra virgin olive oil (common in the food industry owing to the costs of olive oil) is not recommended. There have been academic publications regarding the three oils recommended here, particularly on the consumption side.

Acknowledgment

This paper is dedicated to all the senior citizens around the world who suffer itch and very dry skin.

References

1. Tanei R (2009) Atopic dermatitis in the elderly. *Inflammation & Allergy-Drug Targets (Formerly Current Drug Targets-Inflammation & Allergy)* 8(5):398-404.
2. Wong KV (2016) "Strategies to Strike out Sugar" J. of Epidemiology and Public Health Reviews, Sciforschen publishers 1(3).
3. WebMD. Types of Eczema. Retrieved 7/7/17.
4. Ring J, Alomar A, Bieber T, Deleuran M, Fink-Wagner A, et al. (2012) Guidelines for treatment of atopic eczema (atopic dermatitis) Part II. *J Eur Acad Dermatol Venereol* 26(9): 1176-1193.
5. Katsarou A, Armenaka MC (2011) Atopic dermatitis in older patients: particular points. *J Eur Acad Dermatol Venereol* 25(1):12-8.
6. Norman RA (2003) Xerosis and pruritus in the elderly: recognition and management. *Dermatologic Therapy* 16(3):254-259.
7. Weisshaar E, Dalgard F (2009) Epidemiology of itch: adding to the burden of skin morbidity. *Acta dermato-venereologica* 89(4):339-350.
8. Weisshaar E, Szepietowski JC, Darso U, Misery L, Wallengren J, et al. (2012) European guideline on chronic pruritus. *Acta dermato-venereologica*. 2012 Sep 1;92(5):563-581.
9. Cleveland Clinic. Dry Skin/Itchy Skin.
10. NIH Senior Health. Shingles.
11. Le L, Gonski PN (2003) Delusional parasitosis mimicking cutaneous infestation in elderly patients. *The Medical Journal of Australia* 179(4): 209-210.
12. Unlu NZ, Bohn T, Clinton SK, Schwartz SJ (2005) Carotenoid absorption from salad and salsa by humans is enhanced by the addition of avocado or avocado oil. *J Nutr* 135(3): 431-436.
13. Nevin KG, Rajamohan T (2004) Beneficial effects of virgin coconut oil on lipid parameters and in vitro LDL oxidation. *Clin biochem* 37(9): 830-835.
14. Beauchamp GK, Keast RS, Morel D, Lin J, Pika J, et al. (2005) Phytochemistry: ibuprofen-like activity in extra-virgin olive oil. *Nature* 437(7055): 45-46.
15. Viola P, Viola M (2009) Virgin olive oil as a fundamental nutritional component and skin protector. *Clinics in dermatology* 27(2): 159-165.



Assets of Publishing with us

- Global archiving of articles
- Immediate, unrestricted online access
- Rigorous Peer Review Process
- Authors Retain Copyrights
- Unique DOI for all articles

<http://biomedres.us/>