Breaking the itch-scratch cycle

Itchy and inflamed skin can be very annoying, often ending up in a vicious cycle. Scratching the affected areas even worsens symptoms and is therefore often termed as “itch-scratch cycle”. Common causes of itch are irritations such as allergies, eczema, or dry skin. Bepanthen™ Itch Relief Cream from Bayer calms irritated skin in a natural way. The unique formula has been developed to stabilize the skin barrier that has been damaged due to irritations, and it reinforces the skin barrier, helping the healing process.\(^1\) It contains both natural lipids and physiological humectants.\(^2\)

The skin protects the body from potentially harmful substances and excessive water loss. This natural barrier consists out of several layers: lipids from the epidermis form the most external one, followed by the horny layer (or *stratum corneum*). The lipid rich protecting layer prevents irritants from entering the body and too much water from evaporating.\(^3\) However, in certain conditions, such as allergies, eczema or dry skin, these layers also called the skin barrier are damaged. External irritants therefore can penetrate the skin and cause irritations. Additionally, the skin becomes easily dry and itchy because water easily

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evaporates. By scratching, the symptoms are relieved for the moment, only to become worse afterwards.

Bepanthen™ Itch Relief Cream breaks the cycle by providing the skin with the necessary elements like lipids and humectants to re-establish the skin barrier. The cream contains three key components: lamellar lipids, moisturizers like panthenol, and emollients. These lamellar lipids contain ceramides which are the main natural lipids in the skin barrier and other key lipids such as phytosterols. Together, they form a lamellar lipids structure which is similar to those in the skin barrier. These lamellar lipids structure helps to retain the skin’s moisture. Itchiness and redness decrease, thus reducing the urge to scratch. The skin can slowly recover and rebuild its natural barrier. To avoid any further irritations, Bepanthen™ Itch Relief Cream is free from emulsifiers harmful for the hydro-lipid skin barrier, preservatives, and fragrances.

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Bayer: Science For A Better Life

Bayer is a global enterprise with core competencies in the Life Science fields of health care and agriculture. Its products and services are designed to benefit people and improve their quality of life. At the same time, the Group aims to create value through innovation, growth and high earning power. Bayer is committed to the principles of sustainable development and to its social and ethical responsibilities as a corporate citizen. In fiscal 2016, the Group employed around 115,200 people and had sales of EUR 46.8 billion. Capital expenditures amounted to EUR 2.6 billion, R&D expenses to EUR 4.7 billion. These figures include those for the high-tech polymers business, which was floated on the stock market as an independent company named Covestro on October 6, 2015. For more information, go to www.bayer.com.

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