ECZEMA (ATOPIC DERMATITIS)

1.) **Definition:** This is a chronic skin condition, which can come and go. The skin is red, dry and itchy. It is common in infants but can be found at any age. It is common on the creases of elbows, wrists and knees; infants often have it on their cheeks.

    Eczema may go along with, or be found in families with asthma and allergies. Occasionally food allergies may trigger the rash. The diagnosis should be confirmed by one of our practitioners.

2.) **Treatment:** Heavy moisturizing and steroid creams are the main treatment for itchy eczema. If the rash is mild, or to begin home treatment, use any over the counter hydrocortisone cream twice a day. In addition the skin should be kept moist with lubricating creams or ointments; these should be used at least twice a day. It is best if all products used on skin, and laundry detergents, are dye-free and perfume-free. Some examples of helpful soaps/cleansers are Cetaphil, Eucerin, Dove Aveeno, or Vanicream. There are also helpful moisturizers under these names. Bathing can help increases moisture in the skin if the child is patted dry quickly and moisturizer is applied rapidly after a bath/shower. However, if a child air-dries the skin becomes more dry and this will make the rash worse.

3.) **Call during regular office hours if:**
    - **a.)** The rash becomes raw and open in several places.
    - **b.)** The rash hasn't greatly improved after 7 days of using this treatment.
    - **c.)** The rash looks infected (yellow pus of scabs, spreading redness, red streaks)- call urgently if this is accompanied by fever or looking sick.
    - **d.)** The rash flares up after contact with someone who has fever blisters (herpes)- call urgently if this is accompanied by fever or looking sick.
    - **e.)** You have other questions or concerns.

4.) **Call our office urgently if:**
    a.) Your child starts acting very sick.