



Assessing atopic dermatitis using SCORAD

Atopic dermatitis, or eczema, is a chronic (long-lasting) disease characterized by itchy, inflamed skin. Scratching leads to redness, swelling, cracking, oozing of clear fluid, and finally, crusting and scaling. The word "dermatitis" means inflammation of the skin. "Atopic" refers to a group of diseases where there is often an inherited tendency to develop other allergic conditions, such as asthma and hay fever.

SCORAD (Severity Scoring of Atopic Dermatitis) is a tool used to standardize the clinical assessment of atopic dermatitis in patients. It was developed by the European Task Force on Atopic Dermatitis in 1993 to be

- Precise and sensitive
- Reproducible from one observer to another, and from one day to the next
- Simple to use

A total score is made up from a combination of 3 separate scores based on the extent of the eczema, the intensity of the symptoms and the subjective assessment of disruption to quality of life.

Extent (score A): The percentage area of skin affected by eczema is calculated by examining the whole body surface of the child. The areas with eczema are drawn onto a diagram. The total area with eczema is estimated by comparison to the size of the child's palm, which is 1% of the total body surface. This percentage is recorded as the score for A. The maximum is 100.

Intensity (score B): the intensity of symptoms on the largest patch of eczema is scored against a set of colour photographs:

1. Erythmia/darkening: the redness of the skin
2. Oedema/papulation: the amount of skin that appears swollen or raised.
3. Oozing/crust: areas that are oozing clear fluid or have crusts.
4. Excoriation: level of scratch marks present
5. Lichenification/prurigo: thickness of the skin.

Symptoms 1-5 are given a score as follows:

absent	0
mild	1
moderate	2
severe	3

6. Dryness: an area of skin near to the that affected by the eczema is felt and scored as Smooth=0, slightly dry=1, dry (needs moisturiser)=2, feels like sand paper=3

The intensity scores for each of the six symptoms are added together and recorded as the score for B. The maximum is 18.

Subjective symptoms (score C): the parent is asked how they would rate the child's level of itching (puritus) and sleep loss on a scale of 0-10 over the last 3 days and nights. 0=no episodes, 10=continual. The itching and sleep loss scores are added together and recorded as score C. The maximum is 20.

Total score: The final score is calculated as $A/5 + 7 \times B/2 + C$: A score of less than 15 is sometimes classed as mild dermatitis, while a score greater than 40 is considered to be severe.

Photographs of different symptoms of atopic dermatitis and examples of use of SCORAD can be viewed at

http://adserver.sante.univ-nantes.fr/Scorad_Course/Clinical_evaluation.html

Reference

Severity scoring of atopic dermatitis: the SCORAD index. Consensus Report of the European Task Force on Atopic Dermatitis". *Dermatology (Basel)* **186** (1): 23–31. 1993.

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