



Canadian Chronic Urticaria Society

Chronic Urticaria

Chronic spontaneous urticaria / chronic inducible urticaria / other rarer urticarial syndromes

Urticaria is an autoinflammatory disease characterized by groupings of raised red or white hives (wheals), angioedema (swelling), or both simultaneously which can provoke itching.

These symptoms vary in size and can appear and disappear anywhere on the body. They are generally on the face and extremities.

Chronic means the urticaria is present, most of the time, for at least 6 weeks (although in certain cases it can last years).

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www.chronicurticaria.ca

Types

Spontaneous or idiopathic refers to something unprompted, for which the cause is unknown.

Inducible urticaria is distinct in that it only appears after external physical stimulation.

Causes

Cold or heat exposure, delayed pressure, sun exposure, dermographism (e.g., “skin writing”), vibration or friction, water exposure, sweat (cholinergic), or contact with different substances.

Impact on Patient’s Quality of Life

Chronic urticaria is an upsetting dermatosis. It is challenging for the attending physicians; they are dealing with patients who have a frustrating, unpredictable condition. The patients have high expectations, several impaired quality of life, and a significant emotional burden.

Treatment and Care of Condition

The gradual treatment strategy begins with the administration of a non-sedating H1 antihistamine administered at an approved dose. If symptoms persist after 2 to 4 weeks, the dose may be increased. If the urticaria persists after 4 weeks, omalizumab may be used. If after 6 months the urticaria is not under control, cyclosporine may be used.



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