

COLD URTICARIA

Cold Urticaria is a Rare Reactive Skin Disorder

Cold Temperatures Contacting Skin Triggers Cold Urticaria

It is normal for skin to react to the cold by getting goosebumps or shivering, but cold urticaria causes red, itchy hives. These hives can last as long as 48 hours. Those with cold urticaria may have more severe reactions that may result in death.

Please use this guide as a resource for the knowledge and understanding of cold urticaria's cause, symptoms, diagnosis, and treatment.

01 | Cause

Cold urticaria is caused by exposing skin to the cold. The cold activates immune cells that release histamine and other inflammatory mediators, producing an allergic reaction. It is unknown as to why the immune cells are activated, but researchers believe that people may have sensitive skin cells due to an inherited trait or hematologic disease.

02 | Symptoms

Symptoms may occur as soon as five minutes after exposure to the cold air or water. Some symptoms may include:

- Temporary red, itchy hives
- Racing and irregular heartbeat
- Difficulty breathing
- Swelling of limbs or torso
- Abdominal pain
- Shock
- Fainting

03 | Diagnosis

A dermatologist can diagnose you with cold urticaria. To test for this condition, a doctor places an ice cube on the forearm for five minutes. If the patient does have cold urticaria, a red bump will develop. Additional tests may include blood counts and metabolic tests.

04 | Treatment

Although there is not a cure, the condition may go away on its own or drastically improve for some. Avoiding any exposure to cold temperatures is critical. Other treatment options include taking:

- Allergy medications
- Asthma medications
- Oral antibiotics
- Synthetic hormones
- Systemic steroids
- Penicillin

It is imperative that those with cold urticaria carry emergency adrenaline and make it known that you have this condition before any surgeries.

For additional resources on cold urticaria, please visit: www.coldurticaria.org

Did You Know?

Swimming can be dangerous for people with cold urticaria.

References

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/cold-urticaria/diagnosis-treatment/drc-20371051>

<https://rarediseases.info.nih.gov/diseases/6131/cold-urticaria>