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## NATUROPATHIC EXPERT

Gemma Hurditch, CNM lecturer and naturopath ([naturopathy-uk.com](http://naturopathy-uk.com))

**Q** The skin under my eyes and on my eyelids has flared up with eczema. I'm not sure what has triggered it. What could I do or use?

**A** Aloe vera is useful for eczema, dermatitis and, psoriasis. Pure aloe gel fresh from the plant is best; you can keep a cut leaf in the fridge. Commercial preparations often contain alcohol, preservatives and additives, which may dry or irritate, so if you can't get a plant, look for a gel with few additives. Eczema can have an allergic component, so pollens, diet, moulds or a new detergent are all likely sources. EMFs also have the potential to trigger skin complaints so limit use. The skin has an intimate relationship with your gut, so try a probiotic with billions of colony forming units (CFUs) of *Lactobacillus rhamnosus*, *Bifidobacterium lactis* and *Lactobacillus acidophilus*. The skin round the eyes reflects liver and kidney health in Chinese Medicine, so drink pure water, eat an anti-inflammatory diet – fish, olive oil, nuts, plant foods. Reduce refined sugars and grains, red meat, pasteurised dairy, caffeine, alcohol and vegetable oils, plus try to calm any anger, frustration and stress.



**Q** Are there any herbal remedies that can help me get to sleep during hot weather?

**A** It can be nice to brew your herbal sleep time teas earlier in the evening and allow them to cool rather than further heating up with a hot cup at night. All of the calm and sleep-promoting teas such as chamomile, lemon balm, linden, valerian or passionflower can be taken cooled – however, they must be steeped in boiling water first to allow the therapeutic properties to be drawn out. I prefer a teapot with a lid to capture any aromatic essential oils and allow them to drip back into the infusion. Cooled peppermint tea is also

a nice relaxing tea that has the benefit of being cooling in its nature so may help support sleeplessness due to overheating.

Tart cherry juice is also good as it is rich in melatonin, the sleep hormone. Drink 250ml of it during the late afternoon or early evening.

Lastly, a natural rosewater or lavender-infused spray kept in the refrigerator by day can be moved to your bedside table at night to spritz on your face and neck, to calm and cool you before sleep or if you wake in the night from overheating.

CNM has a superb 22-year track record training successful natural health professionals in class and online. 80% of graduates are practising. For more information call 01342 410505 or visit [naturopathy-uk.com](http://naturopathy-uk.com)