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## Chronic pruritus It itches and itches and itches...

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Itching can have many causes and should be treated differently accordingly. (© dream@do – stock.adobe.com)

**One in five people struggle with chronic itching at some point in their lives. Persistent pruritus can significantly affect sleep and quality of life. However, it is sometimes not so easy to find the cause and in some cases it takes time for treatment to take effect.**

Depending on the etiology, a distinction is made between inflammatory, neuropathic and mixed forms of chronic itching. In around 60% of those affected, the itching is caused by inflammation, write Daniel Butler, University of Arizona College of Medicine, Tucson, and colleagues. This can be caused by various underlying diseases (see table).

One in four people has neuropathic pruritus or a mixed form. The neuropathic causes of chronic itching include postherpetic neuralgia and notalgia paraesthetica; these are typically caused by localized or generalized neural dysregulation.

Around **15%** of...



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