



TOP TIPS FOR MANAGING YOUR CHILD'S ECZEMA

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WebMD Education

Top Tips for Managing Your Child's Eczema

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Top Tips for Managing Your Child's Eczema

This article is for parents and caregivers of children who are living with eczema, or anyone who wants to learn more about eczema. The goal of this activity is to help you work with your child's healthcare team about ways to help better manage their eczema.

You will learn about:

- What eczema is, its symptoms, and who can get it
- Ways to help manage your child's eczema
- Bathing, moisturizing, and other skincare tips
- Talking to your child's healthcare team and questions you can ask



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ACTIVITY GOAL

The goal of this activity is to help you work with and talk to your child's healthcare team about ways to help better manage their eczema.



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

You will learn about:

- What eczema is, its symptoms, and who can get it
- Ways to help manage your child's eczema
- Bathing, moisturizing, and other skincare tips
- Talking to your child's healthcare team and questions you can ask

What Is Eczema?

Eczema is a group of skin conditions that cause skin to be inflamed (swollen) and irritated.

There are several different types of eczema, including:

- Atopic dermatitis, which is chronic (long-lasting) and the most common type
- Contact dermatitis that can happen after contact with an irritant, substance, or allergen
- Dyshidrotic eczema that appears as small blisters on the hands and feet
- Nummular or discoid eczema with round patches that can ooze
- Seborrheic dermatitis, or what is often called dandruff
- Stasis dermatitis that can happen because of poor blood flow



Who Can Get Eczema?

Eczema can happen at any age, but it can be especially common in young children. Different types can have different causes, but many are thought to be caused by a combination of your genes (traits you inherit) and the environment, including allergens.

People who have asthma or allergies, or a family history of them, can be more likely to have eczema. Sometimes skin irritants -- like certain fabrics, soaps, detergents, and cleaners -- can also cause eczema, especially in children.





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Eczema Symptoms Can Vary

Symptoms can be different for different people, but eczema is almost always itchy. Most people will also have dry skin patches or rashes that can come and go. Symptoms can sometimes get worse (flare-up), then get better or go away, with the cycle repeating.

Symptoms may also include skin that's:

- Swollen, scaly, or cracked
- Sensitive or raw
- Hard or more thickened, especially in areas where eczema has been present a long time
- Blistered or has patches that bubble up and ooze
- Draining and crusting, which may be due to infection



Ways to Help Manage Your Child's Eczema

If your child has symptoms, contact their healthcare team member. There is no cure for eczema, but together you can make a treatment plan to help manage it.

This may include:

- A skincare routine with proper bathing, daily moisturizing, and knowing which products to use or avoid
- Lifestyle changes and ways to help prevent flare-ups that may be triggered by factors such as allergens, skin irritants, and stress. Sometimes, though, flare-ups can happen without any known cause or trigger
- Additional treatments, such as medicines





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Bath Tips

Talk to your healthcare team about how often your child should get a bath and which products to use or avoid.

Tips include:

- Use lukewarm water, a soft washcloth, and mild cleanser
- Let your child soak for about 5 to 10 minutes. Sitting, playing, or soaking in soapy water for too long can dry out their skin. Avoid using bubble baths
- Don't rub or scrub -- wash skin gently and avoid any areas with eczema
- Avoid products with fragrances or dyes and water that's too hot -- these may cause eczema to flare up



Moisturizing Tips

Dry skin may lead to flare-ups, so daily moisturizing is important. Moisturizing can also help relieve inflammation and itchiness.

After your child soaks in their bath, smear moisturizer on their skin while it's still damp, then gently pat dry. Layer moisturizer on thickly and avoid using those with fragrances or dyes.

Ingredients in moisturizers that may help can include:

- Emollients to soothe skin, soften cracks, and reduce itching. Emollients often contain ceramides that help moisturize or humectants that help keep water in
- Oatmeal or colloidal oatmeal to help keep moisture in and relieve inflammation, itching, and irritation

For very itchy skin, sometimes petroleum jelly can provide relief and protect skin.





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Additional Tips to Help Manage Your Child's Eczema

Other tips you can try can include:

- Avoiding triggers that cause flare-ups
- Applying wet dressings or cool compresses to help soothe skin and relieve the urge to scratch
- Keeping your child's fingernails trimmed and having them wear gloves while sleeping to prevent scratching
- Using a humidifier to add moisture to the air
- Avoiding fabrics that are rough or irritating and very hot or very cold temperatures
- Finding ways to help distract your child from itching and calm them to help lower their stress



Talking to Your Child's Healthcare Team

Eczema may not happen on the same area of skin every time it flares up, and you may need to try different ways to help manage it over time. So talking to your child's healthcare team is going to be key.

Questions you can ask can include:

- How can eczema look for my child?
- What could be causing flare-ups or making eczema worse?
- How can we help manage eczema and its symptoms, and what skincare routine and products do you recommend?
- Are there any lifestyle changes we should make?
- What should I do if my child or I start to feel stressed?

