

How to treat dry, itchy or 'sensitive' skin in your child

From Canadian Pediatric Society – Caring For Kids (www.caringforkids.cps.ca)

Eczema

Eczema is a skin rash that shows up as dry, thickened, scaly skin, or tiny red bumps that can blister, ooze, or become infected if scratched.

Eczema usually appears on a baby's forehead, cheeks or scalp, though it can spread to the arms, legs, chest or other parts of the body. Often — though not always — it occurs in babies who have allergies or a family history of allergy, asthma or eczema.

How should eczema be treated?

Although there is no cure for eczema, it can usually be controlled and often will go away after several months or years.

- Avoid any products that contain any scents or perfumes
- **Moisturizers:**
 - **This is the most important part of treatment of eczema!**
 - Use immediately after any shower or bath when skin is still damp, and at least 2 times daily
 - Use gentle products that do not contain fragrance, colour, Vitamin E or other additives
 - Examples of moisturizers: Glaxal base, plain Vaseline/petroleum jelly, Glysomed, or other generic product without scents/perfumes or additives.
- **Bathing:**
 - May bath (or take a shower) daily, but shorter time in bath water is best.
 - Avoid hot water (use lukewarm/cool water)
 - Do not use bubble baths or any products other than oatmeal or oils in bathwater
 - Pat dry to remove excess water then apply moisturizer liberally within 5 minutes of finishing bath
- **Soaps:**
 - Use only to areas, as necessary.
 - Try very gentle soaps (i.e. Dove sensitive skin, Cetaphil cleanser, Neutrogena oatmeal, Syndet, SpectroDerm gel, Allenbury' soap)
- **Laundry:**
 - Use gentle laundry detergent without any scent or perfumes (ie. Ivory Snow, Sunlight for sensitive skin).
 - Use a double rinse cycle when possible
 - Wash clothes before wearing.
 - Avoid synthetic fabrics whenever possible.
- **Medications:**
 - If medications are prescribed, use these first (before moisturizers) on only red, quite itchy or affected areas and allow them to soak in briefly before applying moisturizers to entire body