



Information for You from Your Health Care Team

ECZEMA

Your child has eczema (eks-uh-muh). Another name for this skin condition is atopic dermatitis (der-muh-ti-tis). You may hear your doctor or nurse using both names.

What does this mean? This is an itchy skin condition that comes and goes. Your child may also have dry, sensitive skin. It is usually worse in the winter months. Many times other family members will have eczema. It cannot spread from person to person.

How is it treated? With medicated creams or ointments. These will help to improve dryness and control itching. You will also be taught to use moisturizing creams or ointments that you buy on your own. Eczema cannot be cured but it can be controlled with daily skin care.

Will your child have eczema the rest of his/her life? Most children outgrow eczema by the time they are teens. However, about 15 to 20% of children will have eczema all of their lives.

There are some important steps to controlling your child's eczema:

- **Moisturize your child's skin every day.** This is probably the most important step in controlling eczema. Moisturize at least once a day and after a bath. Apply the moisturizer within 5 minutes of getting out of the bath. The thicker the moisturizer, the better. You may use: Vaseline petroleum jelly, aquaphor, cetaphil, Aveeno, Moisturel, or Curel. Remember the winter months are more dry so eczema may get worse during the winter. Moisturizing is very important during this time.

- **Avoid harsh soaps, lotions and detergents.** Many soaps dry the skin and should not be used. Use Dove, Aveeno, Cetaphil or Moisturel cleansers. **Do not** use Ivory, Dial, Irish Spring or other heavily perfumed soaps. The best products to use are those that say "hypoallergenic" or "fragrance free". Pay attention to what makes your child's eczema worse. Sometimes clothing, like wool, will worsen eczema.
- **Cortisone or steroid cream to control itching.** When eczema and itching are getting worse, your doctor will prescribe a steroid cream to help. You may also get a prescription for a medicine like acid mantle cream with hydrocortisone. Steroids are not for everyday use. They are used to get the itching under control. Use them only as directed by your doctor. If it is not working, you may need something different.

Date:

Your doctor recommends that you use:

Moisturizer:

Steroid or medicated cream:

Soap:

Antibiotic:

Anti-histamine:

Other:

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