

What Is Eczema?

Eczema (ex-uh-muh) is a recurring skin condition that may result in dry, easily irritated, itchy skin with raised red patches. It is also sometimes called atopic dermatitis. About 10% to 20% of all children have eczema, with 65% of them developing the condition during the first year of life and 90% before 5 years of age. The cause of eczema is not completely understood. It is believed to be genetic (passed down by family members).

What You Can Do

There is no cure for eczema. However, good daily skin care is key to managing your child's condition. One of the best ways to help prevent dry skin is to use moisturizers. They help trap water beneath the skin, making it more flexible and less likely to crack. Using mild skin cleansers can also help.

Bathing Tips

- Use lukewarm water when washing your child's hands and bathing.
- Use a mild, non-drying cleanser that is fragrance free, dye free, and allergy tested.
- Avoid body sponges and washcloths. Friction can irritate skin, which may trigger flare-ups.
- Gently pat skin dry with a towel. Do not rub his or her skin, as this can remove natural oils.

Moisturizing Tips:

- Apply moisturizers to wet skin (within 3 minutes of taking a bath or shower) for the best results.
- Apply any special skin medications (if prescribed by your child's doctor) and then liberally apply a moisturizer.
- Leave a thin layer of moisturizer on his or her skin. It will absorb in minutes.
- Consider using a moisturizer with oat, such as AVEENO® Eczema Therapy Moisturizing Cream, to help reduce the itching and irritation of eczema.
- Reapply throughout the day, whenever your child's skin feels dry or itchy.

More Tips

- Keep your child's fingernails short and try to avoid scratching.
- Have him or her wear open-weave, loose-fitting, cotton-blend clothing.
- Maintain an even temperature and humidity in your home.
- Wash new clothes before putting them on your child.
- Use dye-free and fragrance-free detergents and avoid using dryer sheets.
- Use sunscreens made for sensitive skin.
- As always, talk to your child's doctor if you have any questions or concerns.

