



## **ECZEMA AND DRY SKIN HELPFUL HINTS**

Atopic dermatitis (AD), or atopic eczema, is a chronic, recurring skin disorder that results in dry, easily irritated itchy skin. There is no cure for eczema but good daily skin care is essential to controlling the disease.

### **Recommendations for Good Daily Skin Care! Soak and Seal**

- 1.** Take at least one bath or shower per day; use warm water, for 15-20 minutes. When your skin is very dry, it is best to take two baths daily.
- 2.** Use a gentle cleaning bar or wash such as Unscented Dove, Oil of Olay, Eucerin, Basis, Cetaphil, Vanicream, Aveeno, or Oilatum. During a severe flare, you may choose to limit the use of cleansers to avoid possible irritation. You should thoroughly rinse off after washing your hair.
- 3.** Pat away excess water and immediately (within 3 minutes), after the bath or shower, apply the moisturizer or the skin medications prescribed onto damp skin. This will seal in the water and make the skin less dry and itchy.
- 4.** Apply any prescribed skin creams or ointments immediately to the involved areas and then moisturizer everywhere on skin which has not received medication.

Recommended fragrance –free moisturizers include:

*Aquaphor, Eucerin Crème Original or Calming,  
Vanicream, Cetaphil Cream, or Moistural Cream.*

Moisturizers should not be applied over the medications.  
Vaseline is a good occlusive preparation to seal in the water; however, it contains no water so it only works effectively after a bathing.

## **Reduce Skin Irritation.**

1. Wash all new clothes before wearing them. This removes formaldehyde and other potentially irritating chemicals which are used during production and packing.

2. Add a second rinse cycle to ensure removal of soap.

Residual laundry detergent, particularly perfume or dye, may be irritating when it remains in the clothing. Changing to a liquid or fragrance-free, dye-free detergent may also be helpful.

3. Wear garments which allow air to pass freely to your skin. Open weave, loose-fitting, cotton-blend clothing may be most comfortable.

4. Work and sleep in comfortable surroundings with a fairly constant temperature and humidity level.

5. Keep fingernails very short and smooth to help prevent damage due to scratching.

6. Appropriate use of sedating antihistamines (Benadryl) and other prescription antihistamines such as Zyrtec or hydroxyzine, may reduce itching to some degree through their tranquilizing and sedative effects.

7. An excellent resource for people with eczema is the:

### **National Eczema Association for Science Education**

www.nationaleczema.org  
(800)818-7546

### **National Jewish Medical and Research Center**

[www.nationaljewish.org](http://www.nationaljewish.org)  
(800)222-LUNG

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