



Pediatric Clinic
 PATIENT EDUCATION HANDOUTS
ECZEMA (ATOPIC DERMATITIS)

Your child has eczema, which is also called atopic dermatitis. Eczema occurs in children and their families who are prone to get asthma, hayfever, and allergies. This means that your child has very sensitive skin with three major problems: dryness, itching, and infection. The treatment prescribed for your child is aimed at relieving all three of these problems. We do not know all of the causes of atopic dermatitis, but we know that many things can aggravate the condition.

In order to treat the dryness of your child's skin, which is usually worse in the winter, we advise that your child take a bath rather than a shower. Your child should soak in warm water for at least 15 minutes to absorb the moisture. After a daily bath, a cortisone cream or ointment should be applied only to those areas which are red or itching. Then, a thick cream or ointment should be applied over the entire body surface in order to keep the moisture in the skin. A mild soap should be used and harsh deodorant soaps should be avoided. Soaps with cream bases are especially good.

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|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> CORTISONE CREAM:
_____ applied at bedtime and _____ times during the day is recommended. | <input type="checkbox"/> MOISTURIZER CREAM:
_____ applied at bedtime and _____ times during the day is recommended. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> MILD SOAP:
_____ is recommended. | |

In order to reduce itching, we sometimes recommend that your child take an antihistamine ("anti-itch") medication on a regular basis until the skin is clear. Very rarely, some children will become overactive or sleepy on this medication. If this should occur, please contact us.

- ANTIHISTAMINE:
 _____ given in a dose of _____ at bedtime and _____ times during the day is recommended.

Because your child's skin is dry and itchy, scratching becomes a major problem and the skin may become infected. Infected skin can have small blisters filled with "pus", "weeping" sores and yellow crust. The skin around the sores can be red. If we think your child's skin appears to be infected, an antibiotic will be prescribed. The antibiotic prescribed may either be taken by mouth, in pill or liquid form or an antibiotic ointment may be applied to the affected areas. In severe cases both may be used.

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|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ORAL ANTIBIOTIC
Take _____
_____ time a day for the next
_____ days. | <input type="checkbox"/> ANTIBIOTIC OINTMENT
Apply _____
to affected areas _____ times a
day for the next _____ days. |
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Eczema can be treated, but it may last for many years and the treatment may change from time to time. It is important to continue to see your doctor and to treat your child regularly as instructed to keep him or her as comfortable as possible.