

Eczema care

Clean: Take one bath or shower daily, using lukewarm -not hot water for 10-15 minutes. Use prescribed bath oil or shower substitute instead of plain water. This will help hydrate your skin. Avoid rubbing or scrubbing the affected skin with a cloth or loofah.

Treat: After drying the skin with soft towel apply the prescribed topical medication to affected area of the skin as directed.

Moisturise: Moisturise liberally all your skin. Ointments are suitable for very dry skin, creams are better than lotions as it locks more moisture. Moisturize few times a day. Pump applicators are better they decrease risk of contamination.

Skin barrier in eczema

Eczema (also known as dermatitis) is a chronic, condition where skin is dry, inflamed and itchy. In mild cases of eczema, the skin is dry, scaly, red and itchy. In more severe cases there may be weeping, crusting and bleeding.

The skin provides a physical barrier against environmental insults and water loss. You can imagine top layer of skin as a brick wall. The skin cells are bricks and fats and oils are like mortar that keeps brick wall intact.

In eczema this natural barrier is broken. If you have eczema, your skin may not produce as much fats and oils as other people's and will be less able to retain water. The protective barrier is therefore not as good as it should be. By applying the moisturiser, we are trying to seal the moisture in the skin and restore the barrier.

Soap and bubble bath will remove oil from anyone's skin, but if you have eczema your skin breaks down more easily, quickly becoming irritated, cracked and inflamed. Hence it best to avoid it and use medicated prescribed soap and bath oils.