

15 Tips for Managing Your Child's Eczema Day to Day

There is no cure for eczema, but there are things you can do to manage your child's skin though and make them more comfortable. Most children grow out of eczema, but in the meantime here are 15 things you might like to consider to make things a little easier:

1. Try to use gentle bath and skincare products. Avoid soaps and too many synthetic ingredients as these can aggravate the skin and cause further dryness.
2. Ensure bathwater is warm, but not hot, as this can cause the skin to lose moisture. Don't bathe your child for too long, or too regularly. Once or twice a week should be enough, just wash children's faces, hands and bottoms daily.
3. Avoid prolonged exposure to sun, harsh winds and extreme cold as these can upset the balance of the skin and cause it to lose moisture and become susceptible to cracking and infection.
4. Opt for natural fabrics next to your child's skin. Wool and nylon can cause irritation, so choose cotton where possible. This will help to keep the skin cool as well which can help alleviate the discomfort of eczema.
5. Make sure your child drinks enough fluids as this can help moisturise the skin from within.
6. Keep a diary of what your child eats to try to identify if food plays a part in triggering their skin reactions. Food allergies usually start to show symptoms when a baby is around 24 weeks old.

Common dietary culprits are milk, eggs, chocolate, peanuts, citrus fruit and food colourings. It is thought that 1 in 10 cases of child eczema are triggered by food allergies, so it is worth monitoring for a while to see if there is a correlation. If you suspect food to be the cause, check with your healthcare visitor or GP before excluding anything from your child's diet.

7. If a food diary proves inconclusive, you might like to start noting external factors your child comes into contact with regularly. Pets, smoke, certain cleaning products and pollen are all possible triggers of eczema symptoms. You may see a pattern of exposure and symptoms and be able to remove or limit them.
8. Dust mites can cause allergic reactions, so vacuum carpets and nooks and crannies of rooms well, and consider washing soft toys and bed linen regularly at a high temperature to kill off the mites.
9. Keep pets out of bedrooms at night. Pet hair is a common cause of allergies, so try to keep children's bedrooms a pet-free zone so they can have restful sleep.
10. Wash chlorine off thoroughly if your child goes swimming as this can cause skin irritation.

11. If your child tends to itch a lot, see if you can identify patterns when they are most likely to scratch, such as when they are quietly reading or watching television. You may be able to encourage them to do something else instead of scratch, like grip a toy to divert their attention.
12. Keep fingernails short on babies and children to stop infection if they scratch. Breaking the skin's surface may lead to infection and the itch-scratch cycle is exacerbated.
13. Keep bedrooms cool as skin can get hot and itchy at night. Heat makes the skin itch more, so a cool room will help them drift off to sleep.
14. Apply moisturisers regularly, and in the direction of hair growth to avoid blocking hair follicles.
15. Have a bedtime routine. Consistent, regular application of moisturisers and skin therapies are the best way to stay on top of eczema and dry skin conditions, so make it part of your evening schedule and give children, and the rest of the family, the best chance for a good night's sleep.

For more information about childhood eczema, and the Bioskin Junior range of products aimed at children and babies prone to eczema and severely dry skin, visit www.bioskinjunior.com



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