

Caring for Eczema — Easy as 1, 2, 3

Eczema is a recurring skin disorder that results in dry, easily irritated, itchy skin. The best way to keep it under control is to establish a daily skincare regimen and stick with it. Here's how to care for eczema skin in three easy steps.



1. CLEAN

Take at least one bath or shower per day, using lukewarm—not hot—water for 5-10 minutes. Many dermatologists recommend bathing at night before bedtime, when the skin is more likely to lock in moisture while keeping irritants out. Use a gentle cleanser recommended for sensitive skin with no added fragrances or dyes and a low PH (below 5.5). Avoid rubbing or scrubbing the affected skin with a washcloth or loofah.



2. TREAT

After bathing, pat the skin lightly with a towel leaving it slightly damp. Water softens the skin and enables it to better absorb medication and moisturizer. Now apply a thin coat of the topical medication prescribed by your doctor to affected areas of the skin only. Always follow your doctor's dosage and application recommendations as well as any directions for applying certain medications to specific areas of the body.



3. MOISTURIZE

Now liberally apply a moisturizer all over the body (not just the eczema areas) to lock in moisture. Ointments and creams are more beneficial than lotions for people with dry skin conditions because the water in lotion evaporates quicker. Dispense moisturizer with a pump or clean spoon to avoid contamination. Apply it with you palms, stroking lightly in a downward direction. Wait a few minutes to let the moisturizer absorb into the skin before dressing. Don't limit moisturizing to bath time. Slather it on throughout the day whenever the skin starts to itch or feel dry.

Bonus Bathing and Moisturizing Tips

- ✔ Look for cleansers and moisturizers with National Eczema Association's Seal of Acceptance™ on the label. These products are intended for use by people with eczema or sensitive skin. You should always test a small amount on your skin before full use to ensure there are not personal sensitivities to ingredients.
- ✔ Bleach baths are thought to reduce the risk of staph infections by decreasing bacteria on the skin and reducing inflammation in both children and adults.
- ✔ During particularly intense eczema flare-ups, wrap therapy can work wonders to rehydrate and calm the skin.