

# Managing Atopic Dermatitis:

## Soak and Seal & Wet Wraps



National  
**Eczema**  
Association

Atopic dermatitis (AD), a type of eczema, causes skin to be very dry and itchy. Two ways to help these symptoms are: 1) the soak and seal method, and 2) wet wrap therapy.

### What is the soak and seal method?

Many healthcare providers recommend the soak and seal method to combat dry skin and reduce flares. This method can be done several times a week and involves three steps: bathing, applying topical medications to affected areas and moisturizing the rest of the body. Step-by-step instructions are below.

### What is wet wrap therapy?

Wet wrap therapy is a good option for when you're having a particularly intense AD flare with severe itch or pain. It begins with the soak and seal method, and then adds the use of wet dressings on affected areas of the skin for long periods of time. Typically, for the wet layer you can use pajamas and onesies for larger areas of skin. For smaller areas, you can use socks, gloves and gauze.

Wet wraps are best done in the evening before bed. This therapy can help rehydrate and calm the skin, while helping topical medications work better. Step-by-step instructions are below. *(Note: Use topical medication(s) as directed by your healthcare provider, and talk to your healthcare provider about which medications are safe to use with wet wraps.)*

### Soak and seal step-by-step

#### What you need:



Bathtub  
or sink



Water



Cleanser



Towel



Topical  
medications



Moisturizer

#### Soak and seal directions:

1. Fill the bathtub with lukewarm water. Soak for 5 to 10 minutes.
2. Use a gentle no-fragrance cleanser. Do not scrub skin.
3. Rinse off with lukewarm water.
4. Pat the skin lightly with a towel. Leave skin slightly damp.
5. Apply prescription topical medication as directed to affected areas of the skin.
6. Within three minutes, liberally apply moisturizer to the rest of your body. Do not apply moisturizer over the areas with topical medication.
7. Wait a few minutes for both to absorb into the skin, then get dressed or apply wet wraps.

## Wet wrap step-by-step

### What you need:



Bathtub or sink



Water



Topical  
medications



Moisturizer

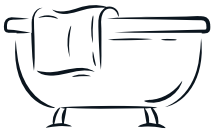


Clean, cotton clothing  
for wet dressings



Pajamas (to go  
over wet layer)

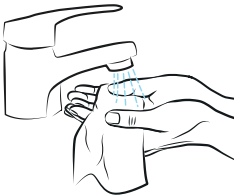
### Wet wrap directions:



1. Do the soak and seal method for bathing and moisturizing. Only use topical medications when doing wet wraps.



5. Carefully put pajamas on over these layers so as not to disturb the bandages.



2. Moisten the cotton dressing in warm water so it is slightly damp.



6. Leave dressings on for two hours or overnight.



3. Wrap the moist dressing around the area affected with AD.



7. Remove pajamas and wet dressings. Apply moisturizer to areas that were wet wrapped.



4. Wrap a dry dressing over the wet one.

### Talk to your provider

Before trying wet wraps for yourself or your child, please consult with your healthcare provider first. They can help you decide if it is a good option for you. For more resources on bathing and moisturizing with AD, visit **NationalEczema.org**.