

## Bleach baths for Eczema

Bleach baths can help reduce inflammation, itch, and possibly bacteria on the skin. Using bleach on your child's skin may sound unusual, but the idea is that you are diluting bleach with a lot of water, recreating a swimming pool in your bathtub. Do not apply bleach directly to skin. Bleach baths can sting if the skin is open and scratched, so consider avoiding them during bad flares. Make sure that your child is supervised closely during the entire bath.

You will need:

- Plain (unscented) household bleach (sodium hypochlorite 6 to 8.75%)
- Baby basin or bathtub
- Water
- Measuring spoons

The instructions are as follows:

- For a basin: Use 1 to 2 teaspoons (tsp) of bleach for 1 gallon of water
- For a bathtub: Use 1 to 4 tablespoons (tbsp) of bleach into 1 full bathtub water
- Soak for 15 minutes
- Rinse well and apply moisturizer immediately
- Perform 2-3 times per week
- Use less bleach if it seems to dry or irritate the skin

## Oatmeal baths

Oatmeal baths can reduce inflammation and itch and normalize skin pH, allowing it to heal. You may use commercially available packets or make your own. You can alternate with bleach baths if desired. Some people notice more benefit from one or the other, so consider trying both, unless your child is allergic or sensitive to any of the ingredients.

You will need:

- Whole, uncooked, unflavored, non-instant oats
- Food processor
- Water
- Measuring cup

The instructions are as follows:

- Grind the oatmeal into a fine powder
- Sprinkle 1 cup of ground oats as the bathtub fills under running water
- Soak for 15 minutes
- Rinse off and apply moisturizer immediately
- Perform up to once daily

## Wet Wraps for Eczema

Wet wraps increase the strength of topical medications, hydrate the skin, and help provide a barrier to scratching. You can use them with or without prescription medications as instructed by your provider. Since wet wraps make the prescriptions stronger, limit use with medications to 1 week to avoid side effects. You can continue wet wraps for more than 1 week without prescriptions for their hydration and scratch-prevention benefits. You may try different wet wrap methods to see what works best for your child. Ideally, these are left on overnight, but you will derive benefits even with shorter periods of time.

Wet pajamas method: can be useful for babies and small children with eczema all over the body

You will need:

- Prescription ointments if instructed by your provider
- Plain petroleum jelly ointment (avoid any additives such as fragrance)
- Damp cotton pajamas (dunk in warm water and wring out)
- Dry cotton pajamas (particularly in cold weather; may avoid in hotter weather to prevent sweating)

The instructions are as follows:

- Apply medication as instructed to hot spots and rub in well: \_\_\_\_\_
- Then apply a generous amount of plain petrolatum jelly ointment all over the body
- Put on damp layer of pajamas
- Then put on dry layer of pajamas if desired
- Leave on overnight or at least 30 minutes as tolerated by your child

Plastic wrap method: useful for particularly rough and thick areas, such as the ankles or wrists

You will need:

- Prescription ointments if instructed by your provider
- Plain petroleum jelly ointment (avoid any additives such as fragrance)
- Plastic wrap

The instructions are as follows:

- Apply medication as instructed to hot spots and rub in well: \_\_\_\_\_
- Then apply plain petrolatum jelly over the medication
- Then wrap with plastic wrap
- Leave on overnight or at least 30 minutes as tolerated by your child