

Eczema Management Advice and Guidance

Paediatric Dermatology

Information for General Practitioners



This leaflet contains generic advice for GPs

Moisturisers, soap substitute & bath additives

- Always prescribe enough: under NICE guidelines 250g-500g should be used each week and if used as a soap substitute as well, more may be required.
- Advise parents to use a clean spoon, rather than their fingers to remove cream or ointment from a tub to avoid cross contamination.
- Creams/Ointments should be applied gently in the direction of hair growth, downwards.
- Ointments are more effective at moisturising the skin than creams. The optimum effective period of creams is 2-4 hours and ointments 4-6 hours, therefore encourage parents to apply moisturisers very frequently, a good guideline is every nappy change, or 3-4 times daily.
- Patient choice counts. If a child will not use an ointment then that is not the most effective treatment to give, even if the skin is particularly dry. Any moisturiser is better than none.
- Always prescribe a bath additive/shower emollient or soap substitute for the child to use. Advise against use of OTC bathing products because they can increase irritation. Any moisturiser can be used as a soap substitute.
- Eczmol is a useful emollient to use where there are frequent episodes of secondary infection. An alternative is Dermol 500 lotion.

Topical Steroids and Calcineurin Inhibitors

These are frequently used in secondary care and a GP can prescribe them if they feel confident in using them.

- Parents (and GPs) are often afraid of using topical steroids. They are perfectly safe if used appropriately.
- Steroid strength should match the strength of flare and the area of the body affected. Therefore use a mild steroid on the face and flexures and a stronger one can be used on the trunk and limbs. But NICE does suggest that very potent steroids should only be used in the under 12 year old group under specialist direction.
- Teach parents how to use the finger tip unit: 1 finger tip unit is one straight line of steroid from the tip of the finger to the first distal interphalangeal joint. It is equal to 0.5g and treats two adult palm sizes.
- Appropriate quantities need to be provided in order that a family can comply with their management regime.
- Topical steroid treatment is advised usually twice daily for 1-2 weeks, then once daily for 1-2 weeks, then twice weekly for those with chronic eczema to reduce the recurrence of flares. The patient should be advised to restart the regime if a new flare occurs.
- Topical Calcineurin inhibitors include Tacrolimus (Protopic) and Pimecrolimus (Elidel).

Occlusive Garments

- Wet Wraps can be initiated in Primary care. Clinifast is currently the most cost effective product and can be prescribed as white or coloured for equal cost allowing for personal preference. Advise the parent to wet one layer of garments in lukewarm water, ring this out and put on over their topical treatment. They then put a second dry layer over the top. This is best done at bedtime and then the wrap is removed in the morning and washed. A family will therefore need at least 6 garments to be able to wet wrap effectively. Wet wraps will increase efficacy of topical regime, reduce itching and prevent damage from itching. Please note wet wraps should not be used when the skin is infected and topical calcineurin inhibitors should not be applied under wet wraps.
- Icthopaste and Viscopaste will flatten lichenification and reduce itching and damage to the skin but can only be used on the limbs. They need to be applied in a pleating motion and not in the same way they are used for the treatment of leg ulcers. Parents need to be taught how to apply these and so it is easier if this is facilitated via secondary care.
- Silk Garments can also be very effective but are costly and therefore are most useful in children with extensive and severe eczema.
- Currently on the market are Dermasilk and Skinnies silk. Both are impregnated with antibiotics which do not wash out. They help to keep the body temperature stable and reduce itching.
- They are the only garments that can be used in times of active infection because they reduce the overall staphylococcus load on the skin.
- They prevent damage from itching and increase efficacy of treatments. Dermasilk need to be soaked and hand washed whereas Skinnies can be machine washed. Silk garments can be worn instead of pyjamas or under day clothes.

Atopic Eczema in Children, N.I.C.E guideline 2007 page 305 0-308.



Today's research is tomorrow's care

We all benefit from research. Leicester's Hospitals is a research active Trust so you may find that research is happening when you visit the hospital or your clinic.

If you are interested in finding out how you can become involved in a clinical trial or to find out more about taking part in research, please speak to your clinician or GP.

If you would like this information in another language or format, please contact the service equality manager on 0116 250 2959

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আপনি যদি এই লিফলেটের অনুবাদ - লিখিত বা অডিও টেপ'এ চান, তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে সার্ভিস ইকুয়ালিটি ম্যানেজার ডেভ বেকার'এর সাথে 0116 250 2959 নাম্বারে যোগাযোগ করুন।

如果您想用另一种语言或格式来显示本资讯，请致电 0116 250 2959 联系“服务平等化经理” (Service Equality Manager)。

જો તમને આ પત્રકાનું લેખિત અથવા ટેપ ઉપર ભાષાંતર જોઈતું હોય તો મહેરબાની કરી સર્વિસ ઇકવાલિટી મેનેજરનો 0116 250 2959 ઉપર સંપર્ક કરો.

यदि आप को इस लीफलेट का लिखती या टेप पर अनुवाद चाहिए तो कृपया डेव बेकर, सर्विस इक्वालिटी मैनेजर से 0116 250 2959 पर सम्पर्क कीजिए।

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ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਲੀਫਲੈਟ ਦਾ ਲਿਖਤੀ ਜਾਂ ਟੇਪ ਕੀਤਾ ਅਨੁਵਾਦ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੋਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਡੇਵ ਬੇਕਰ, ਸਰਵਿਸ ਇਕੁਅਲਿਟੀ ਮੈਨੇਜਰ ਨਾਲ 0116 250 2959 'ਤੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

Ak by ste chceli dostať túto informáciu v inom jazyku, alebo formáte, kontaktujte prosím manažéra rovnosti služieb na tel. číslo 0116 250 2959.

Haddaad rabto warqadan oo turjuman oo ku duuban cajalad ama qoraal ah fadlan la xirii, Maamulaha Adeegga Sinaanta 0116 250 2959.