

Flare-up Treatment

Red, itchy and rough skin are signs of a flare-up. Flare-ups are usually treated with a steroid cream.

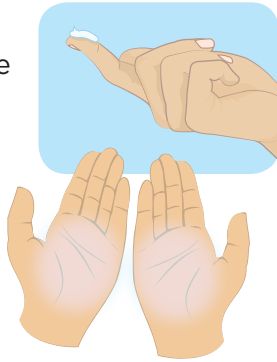
- **Where to apply?**

Apply the steroid cream only to the red and rough areas.

- **How much to apply?**

To help you decide how much steroid cream to use, here is an example:

Squeeze a line of steroid cream from the tip of an adult-size finger, to the first crease in the finger. This amount of cream should be spread over an area that is equal to the size of two adult palms.



- **For how long?**

Do this unless your doctor has given you different instructions:

- Apply the steroid cream 2 times a day, for 14 days.
- If the flare-up gets better sooner, apply it for two more days and then stop.

Always follow your doctor's instructions. If the flare-up is not improving, speak to your doctor.

For frequent flare-ups in the same place:

First, follow the instructions just described. After the flare-up gets better, you should still apply the steroid cream to these places but only 2 times a week as recommended by your dermatologist. This can help prevent flare-ups.

Bathing

- **How?**

Take a bath in lukewarm water. Do not stay in the bath for longer than 10 minutes. Do not use soap. Use fragrance-free gentle cleansers (only 1 to 2 times per week) and rinse well. Do not use washcloths or brushes. Gently pat the skin dry and apply moisturizer right away.

- **When?**

Bathe every day.



See a doctor if your child has:

- Skin irritation that looks different from previous flare-ups.
- Fever (38.5°C/101.5°F)
- Honey-colored scabs on their skin
- Blisters filled with liquid (bubble-looking)

Other Resources:

The Eczema Society of Canada
www.eczemahelp.ca

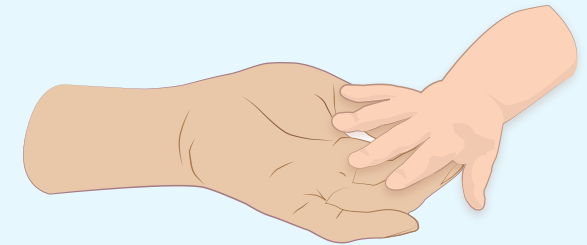
Fondation Dermatite Atopique
www.fondation-dermatite-atopique.org

American Academy of Dermatology:
Atopic Dermatitis Education
www.aad.org/ADeducation

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Parent's Guide to Atopic Dermatitis



- **What is atopic dermatitis?**
- **Triggering factors**
- **Moisturizer**
- **Bathing**
- **Flare management**

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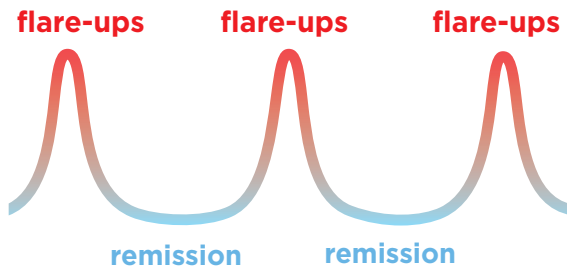
Disclaimer: The recommendations provided in this document are based on up-to-date evidence and expert opinions; but the educational material given here is NOT a substitute for clinical judgment that is required of individual patients. For more information, please consult a doctor.

What is atopic dermatitis?

Atopic dermatitis, also called **eczema**, is a condition that causes inflammation of the skin. When the skin is inflamed it is usually red and rough. Often the skin gets very itchy, but scratching makes it worse.

Atopic dermatitis can be caused by many different factors. Some factors can be genetic (in your DNA) and some come from the environment.

There are times when the symptoms get worse. These times are called **flare-ups**. In between, there are times when there are few symptoms. This is called a **remission**.



**Flare-ups:
Itchy, Red and Rough Skin**

The goal is to shorten the time of flare-ups by:

- Controlling inflammation
- Stopping itching
- Keeping the skin moisturized
- Avoiding skin irritants (triggering factors)

Over time, flare-ups will be less frequent and not as bad. Often eczema clears up by adolescence; but some children may continue to show symptoms into adulthood.

Triggering Factors

Triggering factors are things that irritate the skin and can cause flare-ups. This is a list of triggering factors and what you can do to avoid them.

Environmental conditions

- Avoid places that are very humid or dry.
- Do not overheat the bedroom.
- Wear loose fitting and breathable clothing when the weather is hot.

Soaps

- Use fragrance-free gentle cleansers instead of soap.

Detergent and clothing

- Use fragrance-free and dye-free detergents to wash clothes. Always rinse clothing twice. Do not use liquid fabric softener or dryer sheets.
- Wash all new clothes before use.
- Wear soft cotton clothing and avoid wool clothing.

Food allergies

- Most children with eczema do not have food allergies. If you suspect a food allergy, talk to your doctor.
- Do not eliminate foods without talking to your doctor.

Stress

- Do activities that reduce stress like playing games, exercising and reading together.

Smoking

- Avoid cigarette smoke. Second hand smoke can also be a strong trigger of eczema flare-ups.

Moisturizer

• How?

Wash your hands before applying moisturizer. Apply the moisturizer in large circular motions to the arms and legs, trunk (front and back) and face. Apply in the same order each time so that you don't miss a spot.

• When?

Apply moisturizer to the skin at least 2 to 3 times a day, including after every bath.

• How much?

- Infant: 1/2 kilogram (500ml) of moisturizer over 14 days
- Child: 1/2 kilogram (500ml) of moisturizer over 10 days
- Adult: 1/2 kilogram (500ml) of moisturizer over 7 days



Once the skin gets inflamed (red, itchy and rough), moisturizers are not enough and prescription creams may be needed as well.

Notes
