

COMFORT SKIN THERAPY



AN EXPERT AND PARENT AUTHORED ROUTINE
TO HELP TREAT AND SOOTHE YOUR LITTLE ONE'S
DRY SKIN CONDITIONS INCLUDING ECZEMA

WELCOME TO COMFORT SKIN THERAPY, AN EXPERT AND PARENT AUTHORED ROUTINE TO HELP TREAT AND SOOTHE YOUR LITTLE ONE'S DRY SKIN CONDITIONS INCLUDING ECZEMA.

We understand that it can be distressing for both you and your child to live with dry skin conditions, including eczema. Despite it being common, every child's condition is unique and your experience of trying to manage it will probably differ from other parents, depending on what you've tried or learnt.

Comfort Skin Therapy brings together helpful tips and advice from experts as well as from our Comfort Skin Guardians, real parents who, like you, have tried and tested a number of ways to soothe their child's skin.



Meet the Comfort Skin Therapy experts – our team of specialists and real parents who have helped create this booklet for you.



Meet our Comfort Skin Guardians: Gary and Sarah.

They are both parents like you, who have children with dry skin conditions including eczema. Their advice and tips have been tried and tested and they have shared their experiences, in the hope that what has worked for them can help you too.



Professor John Harper is a Professor of Paediatric Dermatology in London. He has an extensive career spanning over 30 years and is a specialist in the treatment of eczema.



Andrea Grace is a qualified health visitor and nurse as well as the mother of four children. She has worked independently as a bedtime specialist since 1999, and during this time has helped hundreds of families to overcome their children's sleep problems.

We all know how easy it can be to turn to the internet when looking for health advice, however the information you find there can sometimes come from unreliable sources, which may not be suitable for your child. As parents, it is important to trust your instinct when it comes to understanding what treatment will help your child, but also to seek advice from qualified experts.

UNDERSTANDING DRY SKIN AND ECZEMA

Dry Skin

Babies and children are prone to getting dry skin just like adults are. In fact, because young skin is more delicate, it's more susceptible to becoming dry. Changes in temperature from the cold, dry outdoor air and indoor heating can rob skin of its natural moisture in the winter. And if your child is prone to dry skin, they may break out in dry patches in the summer as well, because the summer sun, air conditioning, salt water, and the chlorine in pool water can all be drying.

Eczema

Eczema is a chronic itchy inflammation of the skin condition which typically develops in early childhood. Atopic eczema (which occurs mainly where there's a family history of eczema, asthma or hay fever) is thought to affect one in five children. Eczema in babies often starts between the ages of two and four months. The symptoms are patches of red, dry and itchy skin on the face or behind the ears and in the creases of the neck, knees and elbows.

Did you know?

Atopic eczema is a common childhood disease affecting one in five children in the UK.

Mums find bath time one of the most stressful parts of their day

Bathing your little one and getting them ready for bedtime can prove to be an exhausting time for all families, but new research shows bath time is even more difficult for mums of children with a dry skin condition, including eczema, who are over 90% more likely to find bath time one of the most stressful parts of their day than mums with children who do not have a dry skin condition. In fact, more than one in three (38%) mums of children with a dry skin condition admit they sometimes avoid bathing their child because they find it so stressful.

BATH TIME

As with most chronic skin problems, treating dry skin conditions, such as eczema, takes time and needs to be pro-actively managed as part of a long-term daily routine. One of the challenges is to break the problematic itch-scratch cycle and allow the skin to heal. The following tips could help you overcome this issue.

Top tip

Getting moisture back into the skin

All children are different and treatment can vary according to what works for you, however it is always important when managing dry skin conditions, to restore the 'skin barrier', to stop the skin becoming drier and more irritated. Emollients moisturise and soften the skin and help to reduce itching and scratching, and bathing in emollients every day keeps the skin supple and helps prevent infections in scratches and sore patches.

How do you bathe a child with dry skin?

1. Add a bath emollient oil to the water to help prevent the skin from drying out – try to choose one designed specifically for children with dry skin
2. The temperature of the bath water should not be too warm or hot – try to match the bath water as close to the bathroom air temperature as you can as changes in temperature can aggravate dry skin
3. Soak your child in the bath water for 10-20 minutes – try to avoid keeping them in the bath for much longer as excess bathing can be drying for the skin
4. After the bath, the skin should be soft and slightly greasy. Pat your child's skin dry (try to avoid 'rubbing' the skin too much with the towel), and then apply an emollient moisturiser to all areas of dry skin to help seal the water back in. The emollient moisturiser works by replacing skin oils and forms a waterproof barrier on the skin surface preventing further water loss. This moisturises and softens the skin underneath and helps to prevent it from drying out



How do these bath time tips differ if my child has eczema?

- “If your child has atopic eczema, bathing is the single most important thing you can do to help care for their skin.
- It’s preferable to bath a child with eczema everyday so that bacteria and common allergens picked up throughout the day can be washed off. If your child has severe eczema, try to bath them twice daily as this will help to further cleanse the skin. Using an oily bath additive helps prevent the water drying and irritating the skin.
- After your child is out of the bath and their skin is patted dry, it’s important at this stage to apply the treatment cream, usually a steroid cream, to the areas of eczema.
- Emollients should form the basis of eczema management and should always be used, even when the atopic eczema is clear. They can really help manage eczema and keep flare-ups at bay. Apply the moisturising cream at least one hour after the application of the treatment cream.
- If your child has eczema, washing their hair can be tricky as shampoo in the water can irritate the skin. Try to use a shampoo specifically designed for children with sensitive or dry skin and if you can, avoid using it in the bath. Instead, drain the water from the bath first or wash the hair by leaning over the bath using a shower attachment.”

Top tip

Putting the fun back into bath



Our Comfort Skin Guardian Sarah knows how important it is to make applying an emollient moisturiser after bath fun by using the 'Scarecrow' game. Sarah has two children who suffer from dry skin, Eleanor, who is 2 ½ and Henry who is 6 months.

"Because of my children's skin they can't have the normal bath time experience; no bubble bath, it can really take the fun out of it. I know how important it is to have a nightly bath, and also apply emollients, so my husband and I have devised a little role-play game for after bath to make it a little more fun for them. Straight after their bath we pop them on the bath mat, and tell them to get into the 'scarecrow position' arms out straight up. We then liberally apply emollient to their legs body, arms and face. It makes them giggle pretending to be scarecrows and definitely makes the whole process more fun"



BEDTIME

Helping you have a scratch free bedtime

A restless night often goes hand in hand with dry skin conditions and eczema. If the skin gets too hot during the night it can feel itchy, and without the normal distractions during the day time, this can mean a disturbed night for both of you.

We understand that bed time is one part of the daily routine which really fluctuates between each household, child and even different age groups, and can be the most problematic and exhausting time of the day. Our bedtime expert Andrea Grace, and our **Comfort Skin Guardians**, have this advice to support you during bedtime.

Here are some top tips from our bedtime specialist, Andrea Grace on bedtime:
If your child has dry skin:

- At all ages, using familiar phrases and actions at key points during bedtime including reading a story or a good night song can help create a calming atmosphere
- Try to keep their room nice and cool, using light cotton layers for bedding and avoid playing energetic games which may make their skin hot

If your child has eczema:

- If your child is hot it can make their eczema worse so try to keep their bedroom cool
- Dressing them in long sleeve pyjamas can help reduce the temptation to itch exposed skin
- There may be times when your child cannot help scratching so cutting their nails short and buffing the edges to make sure their nails aren't sharp can help minimise damage to their skin. Tapping or gently pinching the skin until the itch has gone may also give some relief
- You could also try letting your child sleep on a hypoallergenic mattress as some parents find these can further help soothe their child's eczema



Top tip

Our Comfort Skin Guardian Gary has a top tip for a restful night sleep which has worked with his son Owen aged 4 who suffers from atopic eczema.



“It is really important to me and my wife that Owen has a good night sleep. When Owen is tucked up in bed ready for sleep, he always wants his teddies and blankets around him – they calm him, and he doesn’t settle as easily without them. Before we go to sleep however, we move his toys away from his body and loosen his bed covers to stop him getting too hot and itchy.”



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For babies with dry, irritated and even eczema prone skin, Oilatum Junior bath additive soothes by instantly creating a milky bath that wraps your child in a protective layer.

Oilatum Junior bath additive, is an emollient which provides a protective layer of oil over the skin surface, helping to prevent water loss from the outer layers of the skin, and also providing a barrier to keep out irritants and allergens. It is clinically proven to soften and hydrate the skin, preventing future dryness and so helping to stop the itch/scratch cycle.



How do I use Oilatum Junior bath additive?

For children with dry skin conditions including eczema, bathing the skin with an emollient like Oilatum Junior bath additive is one of the most important parts of the daily routine, and a key element of Comfort Skin Therapy. Here is a step-by-step guide to using Oilatum Junior bath additive:

- **Run a bath:** be careful that the bath water is not too warm as temperature can have an impact on your little ones dry skin and make it feel itchy– a cool tepid temperature is perfect.
- **Add ½-2 capfuls of Oilatum Junior bath additive into the water:** the product will then produce a soothing milky bath
- **Wash the skin with the milky bath water:** wash the skin all over paying particular attention to the neck, under the arms, nappy area and any other areas where you child tends to have dry patches
- **Pat your child's skin dry:** try not to rub them too much with the towel as it may irritate their dry skin

Oilatum Junior Bath Additive contains light liquid paraffin. Always read the label. OILATUM is a registered trade mark of the GlaxoSmithKline group of companies.



