

Eczema care

Eczema triggers

Eczema can be managed by reducing the exposure to known skin irritants and triggers.

- Avoid overheating and dryness
- Avoid prickly materials such as woollen or acrylic clothing, bedding or seats
- Some detergents, soaps, bubble baths and antiseptics can irritate
- Food allergies or intolerances play a part
- Allergies to dust mites, plant pollens or animal fur can cause flare ups

If hospitalised

Admission

The admission process is an opportunity to discuss your child's hospital stay and any special needs they may have while in hospital or for going home.

Treatment

Wet dressings will be applied to your child while in hospital to reduce the pain and itching from eczema. You can continue this treatment at home for flare ups of your child's eczema (see 'Care at home' section).

Visiting hours

The Cabrini Paediatric Ward does not have set visiting hours.

Discharge

Your child will be discharged when your doctor is happy with their progress and condition and you are confident with caring for them at home.

Please report to the reception desk in the foyer of the hospital before leaving to finalise any administrative paperwork.

Care at home

Skin care

It is important to ensure your child maintains appropriate skin care to minimise the discomfort, heat, pain and dryness from eczema.

Itching and scratching can make the eczema worse and can cause infection, so it is important to be diligent with skin care.

- Apply moisturiser to the affected areas as often as necessary to promote hydration and reduce dryness and itching. Quality moisturisers can be purchased from pharmacies. Thicker creams and ointments are more effective than lotions. Creams often used include Sorbolene, Aqualol and Paraffin.
- If scabs or crusting areas of the skin form, gently remove the scabs/crusts with a soft wet cloth after your child soaks in a bath. This reduces the risk of infections developing.
- Your doctor may prescribe a cortisone-based cream or ointment. Cortisone is very effective in controlling eczema and is very safe when used as directed.

Dressings and compresses

- Wet dressings can be applied to reduce the pain and itching from eczema. Continue to moisturise the skin in-between dressings.
- Cold compresses can also relieve discomfort of irritated skin. Apply the cold compress for 5-10 minutes then apply a thick layer of moisturiser to the area.
- Soft, cool wet towels or t-shirts/singlets can be used to reduce the immediate itch and redness of eczema. These can be applied throughout the day and night to reduce the discomfort and promote skin hydration.

Managing temperature

Heat can exacerbate eczema flare-ups. To reduce this, dress your child in one to two layers of cotton clothing and use cotton blankets and sheets at night for bed instead of woollen blankets and doonas.

Activity

Your child will be able to return to daily activities if the eczema is well managed.

Prior to swimming, moisturise your child top to toe and rinse well in a shower after swimming.

Hygiene

- Your child may need regular cool baths or showers with bath oil to improve skin hydration - potentially one to two times a day depending on the level of irritation to the skin
- Keep your child's nails short and clean to reduce the risk of infection from scratching

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PAEDIATRIC DISCHARGE INFORMATION

- Moisturisers, bath oil and soap-free body wash should be used instead of soap

Medications

- If the doctor has prescribed antibiotics, be sure your child takes the entire course
- Use prescribed cortisone-based treatment such as creams or ointment to assist in the treatment of the redness and itching of eczema

Follow-up

Please contact your doctor's rooms to organise a follow-up appointment.

When to contact your doctor

- Eczema not managed with current treatment plan, or not responding to treatment
- Bleeding, weeping or infected eczema/irritated skin
- Persistent temperature of 38.5°C or higher

Questions

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact the Ward using the phone number below.