An Action Plan to Guide the Care of Your Child’s Atopic Dermatitis (Eczema)

1. If your child enjoys a bath, allow him or her to soak daily in lukewarm water for 10 to l5 minutes. If your child does not enjoy a bath or if you feel water irritates his or her skin, bathe every 2 to 3 days. Use a gentle cleanser for dirty areas only at the end of the bath.
2. After the bath, pat the skin dry, leaving it damp to the touch.
3. Prescription medications should be applied to areas of the skin that are red, rough, and itchy. These medications should be applied in a thin layer.

* Apply to affected areas of the face, neck, armpits, and groin.
* Apply to affected areas of the body.

1. Apply a moisturizer (preferably a cream or ointment) over the entire face and body. Your child's skin medications and moisturizer should he put on within a few minutes after the bath so the skin does not dry out.
2. Repeat steps 3 and 4 a second time each day if instructed by your doctor.
3. Moisturizer can be applied as often as needed to dry, itchy skin. Prescription skin medications should not be used more than 2 times daily.
4. Continue the prescription skin medications until the red, rough rash is gone. If the ﬂare of the rash has not improved in 2 weeks, talk with your doctor.
5. After the rash has cleared, continue to moisturize all areas of the face and body daily.
6. Restart the prescription skin medications as directed when the rash returns.
7. Antihistamines can help with itching and poor sleep due to eczema.

* Give 30 minutes before bedtime when your child is itchy.
* Give in the morning as needed for itching.

1. Oozing, drainage, pus, bumps and yellow crusts can indicate the skin is infected. Talk to your doctor right away if you are concerned about skin infection.

Bleach baths:

Bleach baths can be very helpful to reduce skin colonization and infection. This should only be done if instructed by your doctor

Directions:

1. ½ cup 6% household bleach in full bath (40 gals) – for smaller baths adjust amount of bleach proportionately.
2. Patient to bathe 5-10 minutes twice weekly in bleach bath

Wet dressings

1. After a soaking bath apply usual topical steroid to affected areas
2. Apply moisturizer to the rest of the skin
3. Apply moist gauze or cotton clothing that has been dampened with warm water to affected areas
4. Cover the wet layer with dry cotton clothing.
5. Keep the child comfortable with blankets and a warm room.
6. The dressings can be left in place for 3 to 8 hours before being changed.
7. Wet dressings can be used continuously for 24 to 72 hours or overnight for up to 1 week at a time.

**Adapted from: Atopic Dermatitis: Skin-Directed Management. American Academy of Pediatrics Pediatrics 2014;134:e1735–e1744**