

Infected eczema guide for families

Signs of infected eczema

See your doctor or nurse if you think your child's eczema is infected:

- Weeping crusted areas.
- Lots of pustules (yellow/white pimples).
- Sudden flaring of eczema all over the body.
- Shivering, painful skin.
- Painful chicken pox-like blisters and sores – this can be the cold sore virus – see your doctor urgently.

Care of infected eczema

1 Antibiotic medicine/tablets:

- Take the antibiotic everyday until it is finished.

2 Bath or shower

- Bath or shower every day to clean the skin.
- Use warm water and a soft cloth to gently soak and lift off any crusts.
- Use a soap-free wash eg non-ionic cream, aqueous cream, emulsifying ointment. Don't use soap and bubble bath as these make the skin dry.
- Antiseptic baths two times a week can help. See bleach bath instructions.

3 Steroid creams and ointments

- Apply steroid to all red and itchy skin (active eczema) once a day. Immediately after the bath is best.
- Use enough to make the skin shiny.

Steroid for the face/neck:

Steroid for the body/arms/legs:

- When the skin is no longer red and itchy stop using the steroid but keep moisturising. If the eczema comes back start using the steroid again

4 Moisturiser (emollient):

- Smooth on lots of moisturiser many times a day to keep the skin soft. Apply all over not just where there is eczema.
- Aim to finish a 500g tub every 2–3 weeks.

When to go back to your doctor/nurse

- If the infection is not improving after 2–3 days of treatment.
- If other people in the house have skin infections – they also need to get treatment.
- If your child is missing school, getting lots of skin infections or not sleeping well because of eczema.