

Wet Wrap Therapy

Wet wrap therapy is a useful tool to treat eczema.

What is wet wrap therapy?

Wet wrap therapy helps treat eczema (atopic dermatitis). Wet wraps can help:

- Increase absorption of moisturizers into the skin
 - Increase absorption of topical steroids into the skin, so more medicine is delivered to the affected areas
 - Act as a barrier to keep your child from scratching, which can help your child sleep better
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When are they used?

Wet wraps are usually for severe eczema flare-ups. Normally, you use them only for a few days, but your healthcare provider may tell you to use them longer.

Wet wraps can also be used without topical steroids to help moisturizers work better and to help prevent flares.

What supplies do I need?

Before you do a wet wrap, gather these supplies:

- Topical steroid ointment prescribed by your child's healthcare provider
 - Moisturizer (emollient): we suggest a clear, greasy ointment like Vaseline
 - Two 100% cotton layers of a wrap of your choice: one for a wet layer and the other for a dry layer. The wet layer needs to be snug or fitted.
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What kind of wrap do I choose?

Choose the wrap that works best for the part of the body you are covering. Here are some examples:

- Gauze: for any body area, but can be expensive
 - Fitted 100% cotton pajamas: for more widespread rash
 - 100% cotton socks: for stubborn eczema on the hands or feet
 - 100% cotton adult socks: if you cut a small hole in the toe of an adult sock, the wrap will fit easily over an arm or a leg. Move it up or down as needed.
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How do I apply the wet wrap?

- It is best to apply a wet wrap after a bath, but it can be done any time of the day. Talk to your child about the wet wrap a few days before you start putting them on so they understand why you are putting them in wet clothes. It can help to offer rewards (positive incentives) for wearing them. You can also put the wet layer in a dryer for 5 to 10 minutes to warm them for application.
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To Learn More

- Dermatology
206-987-2158
- Ask your child's healthcare provider
- seattlechildrens.org

Free Interpreter Services

- In the hospital, ask your nurse.
- From outside the hospital, call the toll-free Family Interpreting Line, 1-866-583-1527. Tell the interpreter the name or extension you need.



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Steps for applying the wet wrap:

1. Apply the medicated ointment to your child's inflamed skin as directed. (Skip this step if your provider has asked you to apply wet wraps just for moisturizing.)
2. Apply a generous layer of moisturizer (emollient) to the areas you have not applied medication, or as directed by your provider.
3. Soak one layer of wrap in warm water.
4. Wring out excess water until it is damp/slightly wet.
5. Wrap the affected area with this wet layer. Make sure it is not too tight.
6. Immediately put on the dry layer (dry gauze, 100% cotton sock/clothing/pajamas) over the wet layer. Do not cover with plastic.
7. Try to keep your child in a warm environment or cover them with a blanket.
8. Wet wraps work best if left on for 1 to 2 hours, but even 20 minutes can help. Sometimes they are left in place overnight as long as they do not dry out. As always, follow the specific advice of your provider for frequency and duration of wet wrap therapy.
9. Once you are done, remove the wraps and apply moisturizer to the entire body.
10. Throw away used gauze wraps. You may wash and reuse cotton wraps.
11. If you have any questions or concerns, contact your child's provider.

Where can I find more information?

- Our handout "Atopic Dermatitis (Eczema)" seattlechildrens.org/pdf/PE573.pdf
- "Eczema: Atopic Dermatitis" from KidsHealth kidshealth.org/en/parents/eczema-atopic-dermatitis.html
- Eczema and Inflammatory Skin Disease Center Rady Children's Hospital eczemacenter.org