

Dry Skin

Healthy skin is important for many reasons. Your skin provides a layer of protection for your entire body that includes your muscles, bones, and organs. It protects you from the heat and cold and helps your body to get rid of waste through perspiration (sweating). Your skin shields you from the harmful rays of the sun and helps prevent infection from outside germs. Skin that is dry and cracked puts you at risk for skin problems such as itching, irritation and infection.

How do I care for my skin?

You can clean your skin in the shower, bathtub or sink. These guidelines may help you to prevent dry skin.

- **Do not** use hot water. It is best to use lukewarm water.
- Use mild, unscented soaps, such as Dove for Sensitive Skin, CeraVe Soap and Cetaphil Cleanser.
- **Do not** roughly scrub your skin.
- Limit the time your skin is in water.
- Gently pat your skin dry.
- Use moisturizer on your skin within 2 minutes after you shower or bathe.
- **Do not** shower or bathe too often. You may find it helpful to rotate your showers or baths with washing up at the sink.

How do I protect my skin?

- Wear clothes that protect your skin from extremes in temperature, wind, water and sun.
- Use moisturizer often including after you clean your body or wash your hands. Make sure to rub moisturizer in well.
- Choose creams and ointments instead of lotions. These can include Aquaphor ointment, Vaseline, CeraVe Cream, Cetaphil Cream, and Aveeno Advanced Care.

This handout is for informational purposes only. Talk with your doctor or health care team if you have any questions about your care.

- It may be helpful to use wet skin moisturizers before you dry your skin after a shower or bath. These can include Curél Hydra Therapy Wet Skin moisturizer and Nivea In-Shower moisturizer.
- If your doctor has ordered a medicine for your skin, put the medicine on first and then your moisturizer.
- Use lip balm, Vaseline, or Aquaphor to keep your lips moist.
- Use sunscreen on any area of your skin that is exposed to the sun, including your face. Choose sunscreen that is “broad spectrum” and at least 50 SPF. It is important to put on sunscreen every 2 hours when you are outside.
- Use mild laundry detergents such as Tide Free & Gentle or All Free & Clear.
- It is important to drink 8 to 10 cups of non-caffeinated fluid each day to stay hydrated.

When should I call my doctor?

Call your doctor if you have any of the following:

- Very red, rough, flaky skin
- Cracks in your skin
- Bleeding in areas of your skin that bend such as your elbows, knuckles and toes