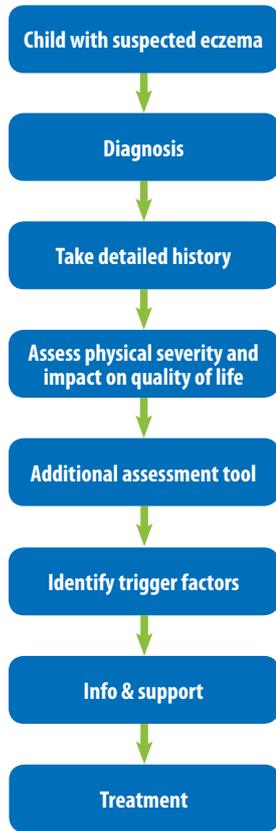


Supporting a family with Atopic Eczema



The NICE pathway for diagnosing and assessing atopic eczema in children aged 12 years and under.

Trigger factors:
 Irritants e.g. soaps & detergents
 Skin infections
 Contact allergens
 Inhalant allergens
 Food allergies

Info & Support:
 Spend time educating children with atopic eczema and their parents/ carers about eczema and its treatment. Provide information via verbal and written information with practical demonstrations and cover:

- How much of the treatment to use
- How often to apply treatments
- When & how to step treatment up or down

Healthcare professionals should use a stepped approach for managing atopic eczema in children. This means tailoring the treatment step to the severity of the atopic eczema. Emollients should form the basis of atopic eczema management and should always be used, even when the atopic eczema is clear. Management can then be stepped up or down, according to the severity of symptoms, with the addition of the other treatments listed below.

Mild	Moderate	Severe
Emollients	Emollients	Emollients
Mild potency topical corticosteroids	Moderate potency topical corticosteroids	Potent potency topical corticosteroids
	Topical calcineurin inhibitors	Topical calcineurin inhibitors
	Bandages & dressings	Bandages & dressings
		Phototherapy
		Systemic therapy

Healthcare professionals should offer children with atopic eczema and their parents or carers information to recognise flares of atopic eczema (increased dryness, itching, redness, swelling and general irritability). They should give clear instructions on how to manage flares according to the stepped-care plan, and prescribe treatments that allow children and their parents or carers to follow this plan. Treatment for flares of atopic eczema in children should be started as soon as signs and symptoms appear and continued for approximately 48 hours after symptoms subside.

Source :National Institute for Health and Care Excellence. (NICE) 2007. Atopic eczema in children: Management of atopic eczema in children from birth up the age of 12 years. Clinical guideline. London . Available from www.nice.org.uk/guidance. All rights reserved.



Useful eczema research



No benefit to using bath additives

- A recent study (BATHE trial) found that pouring emollient additives into the bath do not add any benefit over standard management (soap avoidance, leave-on emollients & corticosteroids)
- Paper: Emollient bath additives for the treatment of childhood eczema (BATHE): multicentre pragmatic parallel group randomised controlled trial of clinical and cost effectiveness by Miriam Santer, Matthew J Ridd, Nick A Francis, Beth Stuart, Kate Rumsby, Maria Chorozoglou, Taeko Becque, Amanda Roberts, Lyn Liddiard, Claire Nollett, Julie Hooper, Martina Prude, Wendy Wood, Kim S Thomas, Emma Thomas-Jones, Hywel C Williams, Paul Little. *BMJ*. May 2018.



Steroid once a day rather than twice

- A review of topical corticosteroids didn't identify any clear differences in outcomes between once-daily and more frequent application. Therefore once-daily use of topical corticosteroids is encouraged.
- Green, C., et al., Topical corticosteroids for atopic eczema: clinical and cost effectiveness of once-daily vs. more frequent use. *Br J Dermatol*, 2005. 152(1): p. 130-41.

Practical tips from families who have a child with eczema

These tips are not research based, but are practical tips that have helped families struggling with the day-to-day impact of eczema:

- Try using a cool pack on itchy skin, it really helps to cool it down and calm the itch
- Fidgety toys are good for keeping hands busy when a child is feeling itchy
- Try not to say "don't scratch", encourage a child to press, tap or gently nip near itchy skin instead
- Garments can protect the skin e.g. Comfifast, Skinnies (sometimes you can get these on prescription)
- If you have an itchy baby or toddler Scratchesleeves scratchesleeves.co.uk and Scratchmenots scratchmenot.com may help (they aren't on prescription)
- Wash with non-bio and non-fragranced washing powder/gel/liquid and avoid fabric softener
- Keep baths cool and short
- You can put creams, pyjamas and teddies in the fridge before bedtime if your child tends to be really hot and itchy in bed
- Cotton clothing and bedding will be soft on the skin (some fabrics may irritate eczema e.g. some wools & synthetic fabrics)
- Young children crawl and play on carpets so vacuum regularly and damp dust rather than use chemical furniture polishes
- Use protective mattress covers and pillow covers if you can
- Wash clothes after being in contact with animals if the dander causes a flare of their eczema
- If you suspect a food allergy then keep a food diary to discuss with your healthcare professional (Allergy UK have one to download on their website www.allergyuk.org/get-help/resources/321-food-symptoms-diary)
- Keep photos of your child's eczema at its worst so you can show healthcare professionals in appointments (use the free app myskinselfie.com to keep them separate from your gallery)



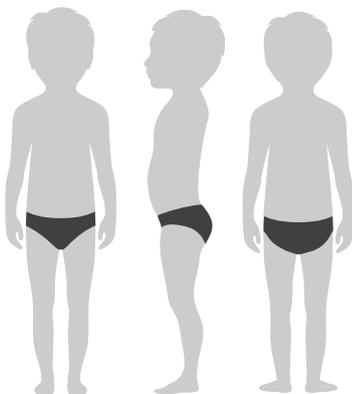
Supporting a family with Atopic Eczema



Treatment basics

1 Use moisturisers/emollients every day (even when the skin looks better)

There are different kinds to try (creams, ointments, gels and sprays) and can look a bit like this:



Put on all over the body



Apply in downwards strokes (do not rub in)



Use lots of moisturiser/emollient – up to a large pump or tub each week!



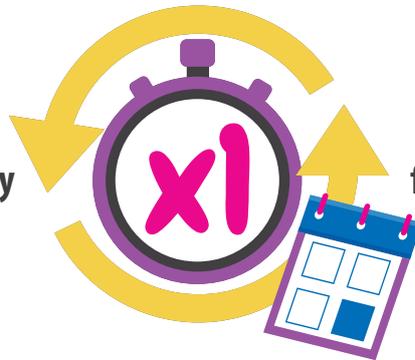
2

If the skin is red or itchy you may be given a cream/ointment to control the flare e.g. corticosteroid or calcineurin inhibitor

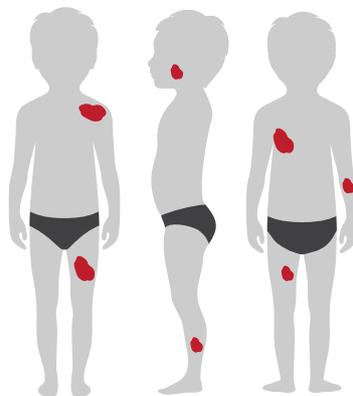
They come in different strengths and can look a bit like this:



Usually applied once a day



for a defined period of time



Only put on the red sore skin (not all over)



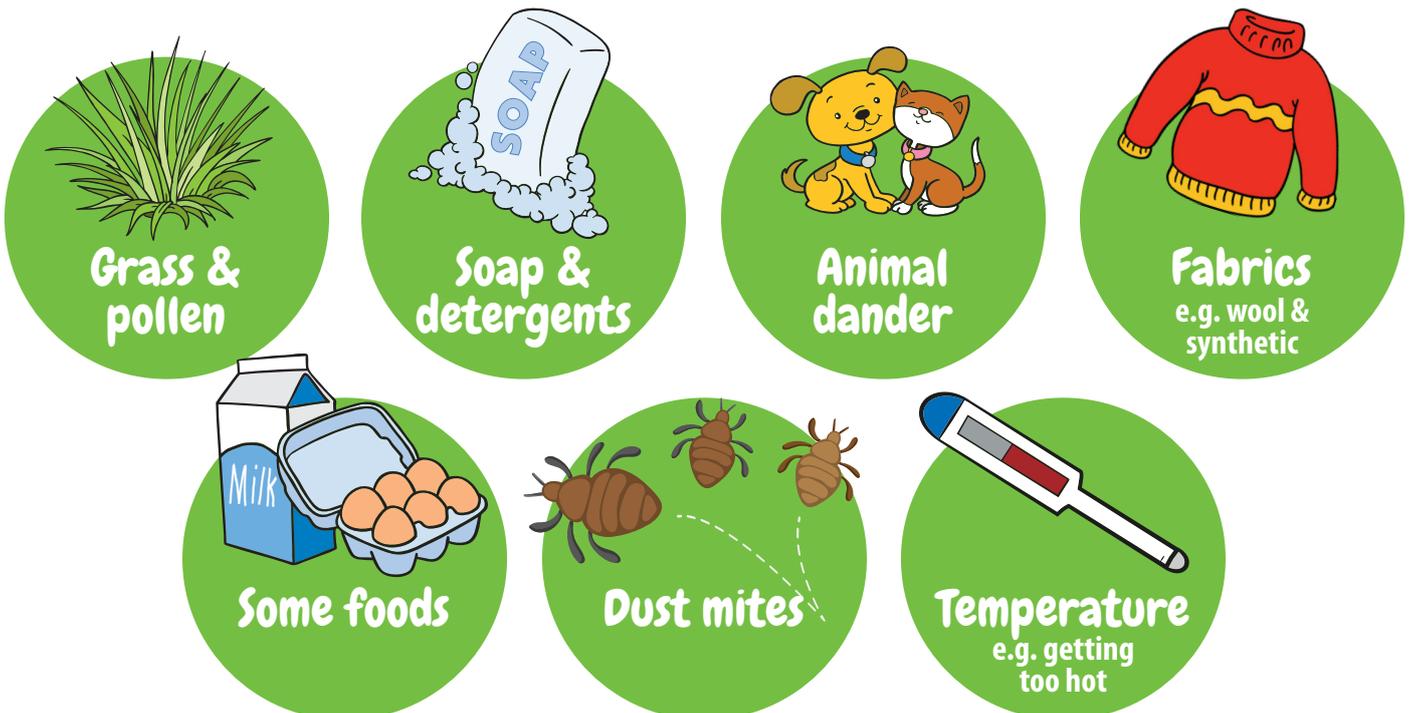
Practical tips

1 Remember to re-order your treatment in time so you don't run out

When you have half a tub/pot left go back to your doctor or re-order your prescription

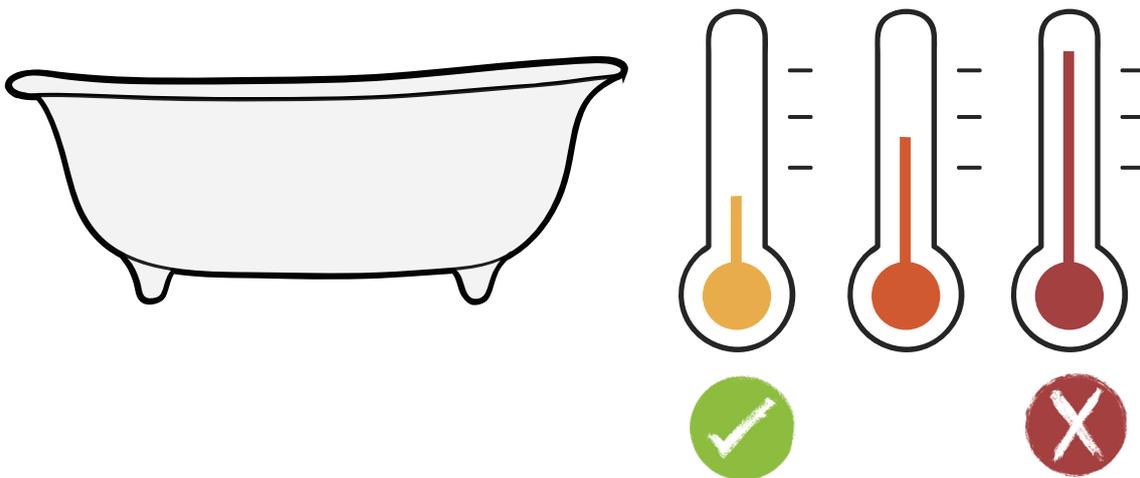


2 See if you can spot anything that makes the eczema worse. Some common triggers are:



3 Bathing a child with eczema

Keep the bath water cool (a hot bath can make a child itchy)



You can use moisturiser/emollient in the bath (avoid soap or bubble bath) and keep the bath time short.



4 Washing clothes

Wash clothes with a non-biological (non-bio) washing powder/gel/liquid. Don't use softener.

