


NOTTINGHAM SUPPORT GROUP FOR CARERS OF CHILDREN WITH ECZEMA

In association with : Nottingham University Hospitals 
NHS Trust

Written by Professor Hywel Williams, Dr Ruth Murphy, Dr Jane Ravenscroft, Nurse Consultant Sandra Lawton and parents on behalf of the Nottingham Support Group for Carers of Children with Eczema.

Caring for a child with newly diagnosed eczema - Information for Parents

Welcome to the world of carers of children with eczema! This information sheet is intended to give you an insight into that existence. Every skin responds to different things, every child approaches life in a unique way and every family have their own dynamics. So there is no right or wrong way of managing eczema but, ideally, you and your child should have as normal a life as possible

Care plan

The healthcare professional who has diagnosed the eczema should provide you with a written care plan. Discuss any concerns about the treatment you have with them, so that you can feel confident about following exactly their advice. There is no need to be afraid when using steroid creams intermittently if indicated on the care plan. Poorly controlled eczema will cause problems for the function of the skin. Medications are usually not supplied on a "pick and mix" basis, but as an overall package. Your plan should, however, include treatments to be used when the skin is flaring. Should you feel that dietary factors could influence your child's eczema, it is essential that you discuss this with the doctor before restricting their intake. There are several emollients (moisturisers) for eczema and you may need to try a few to find one which suits your child. If you, or your child, are not happy with the way the treatment is progressing, then you have the right, according to NICE Guidelines for Childhood Eczema, to request a referral.

Sleepless nights

Whilst the prescribed treatment starts to help gain control over the eczema, you may still get disturbed nights. Indeed, during flares of the skin, you may get them too. But generally you should expect more peaceful nights – and if you are not getting them, you can revisit the doctor to review the treatment.

Washing

Your child's skin will be best if you avoid using soap (emollient can be used just like soap). If your child is under one years old, you should not be using shampoo but on older children avoid using shampoo on their hair whilst they are sitting in the bath. Select an extra rinse cycle for the clothes washer whilst their laundry is being done.

Out and about

If your child's eczema is visible, you are probably used to complete strangers offering you advice about how to treat the skin. So you will have already worked out how to deal with these well meaning but often inappropriate offers of advice and in due course equip your child to handle them too. When your child is invited to a party, of course they should go. But if you know there are going to be triggers present (for instance pet hair or freshly mown grass) you might consider giving antihistamines beforehand. And if your child is on a restricted diet in conjunction with a dietician's advice, try to provide a snack box with similar food to that which all the other children will be enjoying.

School or preschool activities


Eczema is not contagious, of course. Let the school have written details of the treatment needed for the eczema. The school nurse should be an experienced resource should you need help in this task. You may need to help the school /preschool identify times when additional emollient applications may be needed (for instance before and after swimming and messy activities) and arrange with them the best way to ensure that emollient can be applied.

Further information

Nottingham Eczema Support Group for Carers of Children with Eczema (See below)
National Eczema Society 0800 089 1122 have a good schools pack

For further advice please contact
Nurse Consultant Dermatology Sandra Lawton
Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust
Queen's Medical Centre
Clifton Boulevard
Nottingham
NG7 2UH

Email : pils@nottinghameczema.org.uk
Website : www.nottinghameczema.org.uk

For advice on support issues please contact the NSGCCCE via the website
www.nottinghameczema.org.uk and click on the contact icon  at the
top of most pages or email us at enquiry@nottinghameczema.org.uk

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