

## **DERMATITIS CARE INSTRUCTIONS Patient Handout**

### **Bathing:**

1. Once a day, the skin of the entire body should be moistened with water, by either a bath or a shower. Do not add any agents to the water such as bubble bath or bleach. Oatmeal or other lubricating agents may be recommended.
2. Use very little mild soap such as unscented Dove, Basis, Cetaphil, or Johnson's baby shampoo and use only in areas where needed, i.e. under the arms, in private areas, and/or face. Do not scrub the skin, especially the irritated skin, with wash cloths or scrubbers.
3. Limit total bathing time to 5-10 minutes.
4. After bathing, pat the skin gently with a towel leaving a fine moist layer of water. Prescription creams and ointments should be applied to affected areas only. Always apply medications to skin first, and apply moisturizers after. While the skin is still damp, apply a thick moisturizer to the whole skin surface. Examples of moisturizer include:  
Summer: Lubriderm, Jergens, Moisturel, Ammonium Lactate or  
Winter: Vaseline petroleum jelly, Aquaphor, Eucerin cream, Cetaphil cream.
5. Reapply the moisturizer several times a day.

### **Clothing:**

1. Use small amounts of unscented laundry detergents. Double rinse clothes after washing if dermatitis is persistent.
  2. Avoid tight and rough clothing. Wash all new clothes prior to wearing. Avoid wearing wool directly against the skin.
- Other Tips:
1. Avoid saunas and steambaths. These hot temperatures dry out the skin.
  2. Using a humidifier or vaporizer may be helpful. Keep it clean to prevent the spread of molds.
  3. Avoid use of colognes, perfumes, sprays, powders, etc. on the skin as they may be irritating.

### **Use of Topical Medications**

1. Two times per day (morning and night) apply a thin layer of \_\_\_\_\_ to the AREAS OF DERMATITIS ONLY, on the arms, legs and trunk. Apply \_\_\_\_\_ to areas of dermatitis on the face. Use a thin layer of medication only, dabbing it to active areas. Apply the moisturizer to other areas of body.
2. Throughout the day reapply the moisturizer frequently to any areas of the skin that appear dry.

### **Itch Medications**

If a medication for itch was prescribed, take it as follows:

Name of medication: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructions: Take \_\_\_\_\_ orally every \_\_\_\_\_ as needed in the daytime, and take \_\_\_\_\_ orally at bedtime.

### **Infection Medications**

If a medication for infection was prescribed, take it as follows:

Name of medication: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructions: Take \_\_\_\_\_ orally \_\_\_\_\_ times a day for \_\_\_\_\_ days.

### **The dermatitis has improved... now what?**

1. As the dermatitis improves, continue to bathe once a day, following the instruction on bathing.
2. When the skin is no longer rough and or red you may be able to stop the topical medication gradually (i.e. use it one time a day for a week, and if still doing well, stop it completely). You must continue to apply the moisturizer after bathing and several times throughout the day.
3. Restart \_\_\_\_\_ at the first signs (redness, itchiness) of the dermatitis reappearing.

### **Other**

Please refer to all package inserts that come with your medications. Many medications are used 'off-label' based on clinical experience. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask or call the office.