



# Safe & Secure

## How to Prevent and Treat Dry Skin During Winter

Cold weather can take a toll on anyone's skin, but winter months can be especially tough on little cheeks and hands. Without care and attention, your child's skin can become dry, itchy and very, very uncomfortable. Not to worry—here are six solutions for preventing and treating dry skin for babies and small kids.

- **Hydrate:** Dry air and extreme temperatures in the winter can lead to scratchy throats and flaky skin. Start with the inside and ensure children get enough to drink throughout the day. Infants should nurse or take a bottle often; older kids should tote a sippy cup or reusable water bottle. Include plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables in your child's diet, too. The new-to-solid-food set can eat fruit and vegetable purees, while older children should nosh on cut up apples, watermelon, celery and grapes. Soups and smoothies are another great way to keep kids hydrated.
- **Protect:** Make sure little cheeks are protected from harsh winter weather. When bundling up for outdoor fun, rub a little protective balm on exposed spots (cheeks, foreheads, chins and under a drippy nose) to keep skin from becoming chapped. Make sure little hands are kept warm and dry inside waterproof mittens.
- **Moisturize:** Winter means cold and flu season, which means lots of extra hand washing. Some soaps can leave little hands raw and itchy. Stock up on unscented gentle hand cleansers to prevent irritation, and slather on a good cream (not too thick or greasy) after washing hands.
- **Bath smarts:** Exposure to hot water can actually rob skin of natural moisture. Scaling back on tub time will help avoid the itch—about 10 minutes is plenty of time for water play and a quick scrub. Use warm water (not hot) and leave the suds to the very end. Use a mild fragrance-free cleanser to keep skin soft and itch-free. Gently pat skin dry and end with an after-bath moisturizer to seal in moisture and protect baby's soft skin.
- **Mist:** Dry indoor air can wick away moisture. Remember that humidifier on your baby registry? Run your cool-mist humidifier through the cold months to keep indoor air from getting too dry.
- **See your doctor:** Itchy red patches could be a sign of eczema or atopic dermatitis. While eczema irritation can be eased with moisturizing cream, make sure to see a doctor if the patches continue, or if your wee one seems itchy and uncomfortable.

