



Middleboro
PEDIATRICS

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TREATMENT OF DRY SKIN

SYMPTOMS

Dry skin is abnormal scaling, flaking and cracking of the upper layer of the skin (epidermis) that leads to itching and discomfort.

CAUSES

Dry skin is due to a lack of water in the skin's outer layer. Normally, oil glands in the skin produce an oily film which traps water in the skin and prevents it from evaporating. There are several reasons why skin gets dry:

- Low relative humidity levels (less than 60%) from indoor heat, cold winter air, and even air conditioning.
- Excessive contact with soaps and detergents.
- Heredity. Some people are more prone to dry skin than others.
- Medically related conditions such as eczema, psoriasis, diabetes and contact dermatitis.

PREVENTION/TREATMENT

- Avoid soaps that dry the skin. Especially avoid Ivory or deodorant soaps and soaps labeled anti-bacterial. Recommended are unscented, mild moisturizing soaps. (e.g. Dove, Cetaphil, Camay, etc)

■ During the summer a child may need a daily bath. During the winter months when children are more prone to dry skin, a bath may be needed only a few times a week. This applies to bathing with soap. A plain water bath can be done daily.

■ Apply moisturizer daily. Ointments are more effective than creams which are more effective than lotions. Apply either once or twice a day. Apply moisturizer immediately after bathing. Use unscented, fragrance-free moisturizers.

■ Lower the temperature and use a humidifier in your home during the winter months. An inexpensive alternative is to put a shallow pan of water near a heating source or use a vaporizer.

Call our office if your child has complaints as below not managed by the steps listed above.

- Significant discomfort, itchiness
- Develops a rash
- Any other concerns