



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 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.
- # Aging. As we get older our skin loses some of its ability to hold water.
- # 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. Recommended soaps include Dove, Camay, Aveeno Cleansing Bar, or Eucerin Cleansing Bar.
- # Bathe less often. During the summer a child may need a daily bath. During the winter months when children are more prone to dry skin, a bath is needed only two or three 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. On the day that your child has a bath, apply moisturizer immediately after bathing.
- # 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.
- # Use gloves; wear protective clothing when doing housework or household improvements. However, avoid extended wear of rubber gloves or try wearing cotton ones underneath them.
- # Apply a moisturizing sunscreen before extended time outdoors.
- # If the dry skin condition continues or worsens, please contact our office.