Treatment Options for Baby Eczema

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Baby Eczema Treatment Can Be Done at Home, or by Prescription

Baby eczema is very common. It is generally considered that at least one in every five babies has it during their first year. But knowing that it is common does not make it any easier to deal with.

Seeing your lovely baby struggling with skin that is red and sore can be heartbreaking, and can make those first few months much harder. Babies with eczema often find it harder to settle and sleep, which causes a strain on the whole family.

There are many options that you can do to relieve your little one's eczema, and thankfully, a lot of children will grow out of it. Now, let's look at some common baby eczema treatment options.

Simple Options to Try at Home

There are lots of things that you can do at home to help your baby's eczema. A lot of these tips are easy to do and can fit into your daily routine quite easily.

For starters, try bathing your baby less. Many new parents think that their baby needs a bath every single night, but that is not necessary. In fact, it is harmful to their delicate skin. When you do give your baby a bath, make sure you apply an emollient or moisturizer afterward, and use an eczema bath product rather than a standard bubble bath. Be careful, though, as emollients can make things more slippery than usual.

Be sure to keep their bedroom cool. It's tempting to wrap your baby up in layers of clothing and bed covers so that you know they will be warm, but it is better to have a cooler room. Hot skin tends to be itchy skin. They will tell you if they are cold.

Don't try to have a sterile house! Clean is fine, but do not live as if you are in an operating room. Your baby's immune system needs to come in contact with germs so it knows what to do with them, otherwise it can react badly, which will cause allergies.

Smoking around babies is always dangerous. You do not want your newborn to inhale second-hand smoke, as it can damage their lungs. Being around smoke can also have harmful effects on their skin, which can exacerbate eczema flare-ups.

Always do your best to prevent your baby from scratching their skin. Scratch mitts are great on little babies. On older babies, long-sleeved clothing works well. These options will make it much harder for them to scratch, and having their skin covered makes it feel less itchy.

However, do not keep their hands covered during the day, as it will hinder the baby's developing hand function. You should also avoid wool clothing next to the skin, a it can feel itchy, and some babies may have a wool allergy.

DIY Home Baby Eczema Treatments

There are a few baby eczema treatment options you can try at home that do not require a trip to the pharmacy. However, if your baby's eczema gets worse, be sure to consult a doctor sooner than later.

Shea butter and coconut oil are both suitable for use on babies. Coconut oil is a lighter moisturizer, and smells wonderful. Shea butter is a heavier moisturizer and is better on drier skin. They can be used to wash your baby, or used as a moisturizer on the skin afterward.

Some parents also use aromatherapy for eczema symptoms. To try this, combine a couple drops of lavender oil in a couple tablespoons of almond or olive oil. You can massage this onto the baby's skin. This can be a relaxing way to wind down before bed, and a good replacement for a nightly bath.

The lavender oil will help the baby settle and sleep through the night, and the carrier oils have nutritional benefits for the skin. However, make sure you never apply the lavender oil without diluting it in the carrier oil first.

Over-the-Counter Eczema Products

There is an enormous range of products that you can use to treat baby eczema. A lot of them have similar ingredients, with a few variations. They can be very useful in treating your baby's eczema.

A popular option is Aveeno Baby Dermalux Emollient. Aveeno has a full range of baby (and adult) eczema products, from bath preparations to emollients, lighter lotions, and more. They have three extracts of oats, which protect the skin and reduce eczema flare-ups. It does not contain any parabens, dyes, alcohol, or scents (although not many baby eczema preparations do). Aveeno also contains petroleum as the emollient base.

Some parents prefer to use Baby E45 Cream. The E45 range includes lots of products for children, from bath foam to emollient creams. E45 contains lanolin which, while usually tolerated well, can worsen eczema symptoms in some babies. It's a paraffin based emollient and is only suitable for children over one month old.

Another popular option is Ultra Bee Exeskin. Ultra Bee is made from sunflower oil, avocado oil and honey byproducts (as well as a few other ingredients). It contains a range of vitamins which help reduce redness and irritation. It does not contain any colorants, preservatives, perfumes, lanolin, petroleum, or parabens. It's also suitable for all ages, and not tested on animals.

Prescriptions for Baby Eczema Treatment

Sometimes home remedies and over-the-counter products are not enough and your baby needs medical treatment. There is a vast range of products available for prescription. Always make sure to check with your doctor to ensure you are using the best treatment option for your baby.

Many doctors will prescribe a medical emollient. These form the basis of eczema care. They are moisturizing creams that rubbed into the baby's skin. Emollients are used to treat eczema flare-ups and to protect the skin between flare-ups.

They can be applied liberally (multiple times per day), and can also be used as a soap substitute. If the emollient doesn't seem to be working, ask your doctor if you can try a different one. Sometimes the product needs to be changed if it is no longer working.

Your doctor may also prescribe steroid creams. Prescription steroid creams for eczema (corticosteroid) are used to treat eczema flare-ups and are designed for short-term use. They come in a variety of strengths.

Once the eczema is under control, return to using an emollient. It's generally best to apply emollients and steroids at separate times—at least half an hour apart—to ensure they are both absorbed properly. Make sure you read and follow the instructions that the doctor gives you.

Final Considerations

Eczema in babies is not nice, but there are lots of things that we can do to help them. We can make a few simple changes to our lifestyle, apply creams or oils from home, from the pharmacy, or get baby eczema treatment options from the doctor.