



## SKIN CARE INSTRUCTIONS FOR ECZEMA OR DRY AND ITCHY SKIN

Dry skin is an extremely common problem here in Idaho due to the low humidity in our environment. Dry skin can be a major cause of itching and can cause eczema and many other skin conditions to flare. Learning how to take care of your dry skin can lead to major improvements in quality of life. In order to improve your skin barrier and reduce dryness and itching, it is important to follow the skin care instructions listed below.

- Take short showers (5 mins or less) and avoid hot showers. Use mild bar/liquid soaps (Dove, Cetaphil, Cerave) and use only on areas truly needed (underarms, groin, buttocks, feet). If using soap in a bathtub, use only at the end of the bath to avoid over-drying the skin. Pat off excess water with a towel and put moisturizer on immediately (within 3 minutes of finishing your shower).

- Thick moisturizing creams and ointments work better than lotions. This means you should be looking for a moisturizer that comes in a tub or squeeze tube rather than a pump. Suggested Moisturizers Include:

CeraVe Cream, Cetaphil Cream, Vanicream, Eucerin Original Healing Cream, Aquaphor Healing Ointment, Vaseline Ointment (Petroleum Jelly)

- A cream/ointment should always be applied immediately after showering or bathing, and may be applied as often as needed throughout the day. The itchier your skin is, the more likely your skin is dry. Moisturize as often as possible to prevent you from itching and scratching. Consider keeping your moisturizer in the fridge as this can provide additional itch relief through the cooling effect.

- If you were given a topical steroid by your physician, apply your steroid before you apply any of your moisturizers. Make sure that as your skin clears up (no redness and feels like normal skin) stop using the steroid, but DO NOT STOP using moisturizing creams/ointments. This will prevent your skin from becoming irritated again and will decrease your need for steroids.

- If you continue to itch, use Sarna Sensitive or CeraVe Itch Relief cream for intermittent itching as often as needed. These lotions are available over the counter.