

MYTH	FACT
<b>Eczema is contagious</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The reality is that eczema is a genetic problem with the environment also a factor. The outside layer of skin has micro cracks that can let moisture out and inflammation occurs leading to skin that may look red, flaky and can be weepy. This is not "catching" and cannot be passed on to someone else.</li> <li>If the skin has open sores or blisters that have become infected, then this could spread to other people.</li> </ul>
<b>It's just a skin problem, isn't it? / Eczema is not serious</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eczema can have a huge impact on a child's quality of life in terms of lack of sleep for the child and family; it is painful as well as itchy; there can be embarrassment, teasing and bullying; a child may not be able to participate in normal activities such as sport.</li> </ul>
<b>Topical steroids are unsafe and should be used sparingly</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These are needed when eczema is flaring (red and itchy). These creams or ointments are generally used once daily aiming to calm the inflamed skin.</li> <li>Using the skin steroid too thinly (sparingly) may lead to not calming the rash. They should be applied to all rashes adequately.</li> </ul>
<b>Moisturiser alone will work</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When there is flared (red and itchy) eczema skin, this needs the help of skin steroids.</li> <li>Moisturisers though are very important, applied at least morning and evening, smoothed on in the direction that hair grows.</li> </ul>
<b>Any moisturiser will work</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moisturisers may contain many ingredients, some of which may in fact make eczema worse.</li> <li>A simple cream or ointment, rather than a lotion, is advised, and avoiding ingredients that come from foods.</li> </ul>
<b>Bathing too frequently will make eczema worse</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bathing is well tolerated and essential for care of children with eczema. This will wash off bugs, dirt and can help to hydrate the skin.</li> <li>Ideally bath daily, in warm water, avoiding soap or bubble bath, and always using a soap free product to wash the skin.</li> <li>It is also important to apply the moisturiser straight after the bath.</li> </ul>
<b>Bleach baths are not appropriate for my child</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These are very safe when used appropriately, and are used to decrease bugs sitting on eczema skin.</li> <li>The correct bleach and the dilution is important (See <a href="https://www.kidshealth.org.nz/when-how-use-bleach-baths-your-child-eczema">https://www.kidshealth.org.nz/when-how-use-bleach-baths-your-child-eczema</a>)</li> </ul>
<b>You should not go swimming</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spending too much time in water can make eczema skin worse, especially if skin is more currently flared. However when clearer skin, swimming can be tried, and is often well tolerated.</li> <li>Children being confident in water is valuable.</li> <li>Always moisturise before, don't spend too long, get out and have a fresh water wash off, and moisturise again.</li> </ul>
<b>A family history of eczema means baby will have it also</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eczema is more likely when there is a family member with eczema, but not all children will develop this.</li> <li>When there is no parent with eczema, a child may also get some eczema.</li> </ul>
<b>Eczema can be cured</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is no single treatment that can make eczema go away permanently. Good skin care is the main focus to managing eczema skin. This is a chronic condition which is likely to go through changes at different stages of life.</li> </ul>
<b>It's an allergic reaction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eczema is caused by the outside layer of skin not being made properly. Flares can be worsened by dust, soaps or pollens, and sometimes food, passing into the skin, causing it to get red and inflamed. These are irritants which flare the skin, rather than being an allergy.</li> </ul>
<b>Stopping a food, or changing the diet should help</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Food avoidance will not necessarily improve eczema, and is not generally advised. Good skin care is the focus to help eczema.</li> <li>With diagnosed food allergy, or in severe eczema not responding to topical treatment, food avoidance should be discussed with your doctor or nurse specialist before withdrawing food from a child's diet (See Eczema and Food Allergy – Fast Facts)</li> </ul>