



Dilute Bleach Baths

Baths with a small amount of bleach in them can be helpful for your child's atopic dermatitis. It helps get rid of germs that cause infections. Be careful when giving bleach baths. Bleach that is not very watered down (diluted) is a dangerous household poison.

- Never use undiluted bleach directly on the skin.
- Avoid getting dilute bleach water in your child's eyes or in your eyes.
- Do not swallow dilute bleach water.
- Throw away or drain any unused bleach or bleach water right after use.
- Keep bleach bottle out of reach of children.
- Adding bleach can make your bathtub slippery, so be extra careful to keep your child from falling.

To Learn More

- Dermatology
206-987-2158
- Ask your child's healthcare provider
- www.seattlechildrens.org

Free Interpreter Services

- In the hospital, ask your child's nurse.
- From outside the hospital, call the toll-free Family Interpreting Line 1-866-583-1527. Tell the interpreter the name or extension you need.

How should I prepare a dilute bleach bath?

Give your child dilute bleach baths 2 to 3 times a week, or as often as your child's doctor says you should. Follow these steps:

1. Use common unscented household liquid bleach (like Clorox). Look at the bottle to check the concentration of bleach. On the bottle, "bleach" might be called "sodium hypochlorite." These mean the same thing. The concentration should be about 6 to 8.75%.
2. Fill up the tub with lukewarm water. There are about 40 gallons in a normal bathtub. A half-full tub is about 20 gallons.
3. Pour 1 to 4 **tablespoons (Tbs)** of bleach into the bath water for a normal full bathtub. If you have a smaller tub or if you do not fill the tub all the way, use 1 to 2 **teaspoons (tsp)** of bleach for each gallon of water. You can use a gallon milk jug to measure your bathtub. Ask your child's healthcare provider how much to use at first.
4. Completely mix the added bleach in the water with a spatula, a spoon or with your hand.
5. Have your child soak in the chlorinated water for about 10 minutes. For smaller children, use a cloth or sponge to soak the dry, scaly parts of the body with the dilute bleach bathwater.
6. At the end of the bleach bath, rinse your child's skin very well with fresh, clean, lukewarm water.
7. Gently pat your child's skin dry.
8. Put medicine or moisturizer (or both) on your child's skin.
9. Repeat bleach baths 2 to 3 times a week or as prescribed by your child's healthcare provider.

Seattle Children's offers interpreter services for Deaf, hard of hearing or non-English speaking patients, family members and legal representatives free of charge. Seattle Children's will make this information available in alternate formats upon request. Call the Family Resource Center at 206-987-2201.

This handout has been reviewed by clinical staff at Seattle Children's. However, your child's needs are unique. Before you act or rely upon this information, please talk with your child's healthcare provider.

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