

THE DO's AND DON'Ts of Rashes

Many things can cause rashes. Scratching a rash can cause an infection. If you have a rash, see a dermatologist or your doctor to find out what is causing your rash. The doctor will help you find the best ways to treat the rash. Some of the things the doctor may suggest are:



Do try an antihistamine like Benadryl®(diphenhydramine*) at night time if itching is keeping you from sleeping.

**Follow the instructions on the package for the proper use and dosage.*



Do add an oatmeal bath product, such as AVEENO® Oilated Oatmeal to lukewarm water in the bathtub, and soak for a little while.



Do use a gentle body wash or cleanser similar to Dove® in the shower.



Do apply over-the-counter 1% hydrocortisone cream/ointment twice a day (preferably after a bath or shower) for at least 4-5 days in a row.



Do apply a good moisturizer (choose a cream, oil, or petroleum-based product) to the rash. One good brand is Aquaphor® Advanced Therapy Healing Ointment.



Do clean open wounds with a gentle cleanser and water.



Do follow the advice of a dermatologist or your doctor. A proper diagnosis is important to help with rash treatment.



Don't use rubbing alcohol on your skin. It does not help healing, does not kill infectious bacteria, it stings, dries out your skin, and makes rashes like eczema worse.



Don't use bar soap. Many bar soaps can dry skin.



Don't clean open wounds with hydrogen peroxide or bleach. These things can make the rash worse, and keep it from healing.



Don't use light lotions. They spread easily but do not provide much needed moisture compared to cream, oil, or petroleum based products.



Don't use a triple-antibiotic ointment similar to NEOSPORIN®. It doesn't kill the bacteria that cause skin infections, and may cause an allergic reaction on the skin due to one of the ingredients.

This document is based on recommendations by Dr. Walter Barkey, MD, a board certified Dermatologist and the Genesee County Medical Society.

Dr. Barkey practices in Flint, Michigan (6-2016)