



MOISTURIZERS

GREATER WASHINGTON DERMATOLOGY, PA/CAPITAL DERMATOLOGY

The technique of proper moisturization cannot be overemphasized, as it is of primary importance in the treatment of eczema, psoriasis, and many other skin conditions which feature redness, scaliness, itchiness, or dryness. While medications are important in returning your skin to its normal state, proper moisturization will ensure a more rapid response, and often prolong the effect of the medicine.

In general, the thicker the moisturizer, the better, since these compounds act to “seal in” the water already in your skin. It is for this reason that we recommend that you apply the moisturizer several times per day, especially after your skin is dampened (like after hand washing or showers), but before your skin has a chance to dry. Some recommended moisturizers in descending order of thickness are: petroleum jelly, Aquaphor, Neutrogena Norwegian Formula, Eucerin cream, Cetaphil cream, Crisco vegetable shortening, CeraVe Cream, and acid mantle cream. For warmer months, the thinner moisturizers are acceptable such as Nivea, Lubriderm, Curel.

Look for cleansers with moisturizers such as Dove unscented, Oil of Olay bar, Lever 2000, Basis) and avoid those which tend to be drying such as Dial, Safeguard, and Ivory. Using bath oils in the bath or applying at the end of your shower will help.

Moist occlusive technique is useful for severely dry skin. Used mostly for the hands and feet at bedtime, it can greatly increase the effectiveness of moisturizers or topically applied medications. In this technique, the area to be treated is first soaked in luke-warm water for 5 minutes then patted dry. The medication or moisturizer is applied, and a damp, white cotton glove or sock is then worn. Over this, a rubber or latex glove is placed. This technique is safe for prolonged periods of time when using moisturizers, ***but may be dangerous if used with medications, so be sure not to use it with medicated creams or ointments without instructions from the doctor.***

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Remember that you should try to use a moisturizer as often as possible, and especially after getting your skin wet for any reason. If you wash often, try having a tube near the sink or carry one with you. If despite proper moisturizing technique, your skin condition continues to worsen, does not improve, or if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call our office or visit our website.