



Self-care Information

Dry Skin (mild)

Tips on how you can self-manage dry skin.

“Supporting you to look after you.”

Key Points:

- Drink plenty of water.
- Reduce the length of time you spend in the bath or shower.
- Avoid the use of harsh soaps and bubble baths.
- Reduce or stop smoking.
- Use an emollient (moisturiser) regularly.
- Use a soap substitute.

What causes dry skin?

Dry skin is very common. It can be caused by:

- Excessive bathing or showering, scrubbing the skin while washing or the use of harsh soaps.
- Very hot, dry weather or central heating.
- Decreased production of sebum as we get older (a protective oily substance in the skin).

What can be done to prevent dry skin?

There are lifestyle changes that can be made which can help to treat and prevent future outbreaks of dry skin:

You could try...

- ✓ Drinking plenty of water.
- ✓ Reducing the length of your bath or shower.



Try not to...

- ✗ Use harsh soaps and bubble baths.
- ✗ Smoke. Cutting back the amount you smoke or stopping smoking altogether can benefit your skin and your health overall.



How to treat dry skin?

Emollients

These are moisturising treatments that should be applied frequently. They come in a cream, ointment or spray form. Apply an emollient to reduce dryness, help with itching, reduce scaling, and soften cracks. They can be purchased from supermarkets and pharmacies. To help prevent dry skin in the future apply an emollient even when the skin is fine.

Keep away from fire, flames and cigarettes when using emollients. Dressings and clothing soaked with the emollient can be easily ignited.

Soap substitutes

Most emollients can be used as a soap substitute. They will also help to lock in moisture. They don't foam but still clean as well as normal soap.

How to use a soap substitute:

- Mix a small amount (around teaspoonful) of soap substitute in the palm of your hand with a little warm water and spread it over damp or dry skin. Rinse and pat the skin dry, being careful not to rub it.
- You can use soap substitutes for handwashing, showering or in the bath.

Speak to your pharmacist - for advice if you're not sure which type of medicine is best for you and your symptoms.



When to seek advice

- You have recurrent or severe symptoms of dry skin.
- Dry skin does not improve after 7-14 days of regular treatment or is getting worse.
- If the skin is red or sore.

Here are some links to further information:

Look at the NHS Website: <https://www.nhs.uk/>

For a Patient Website: <https://patient.info/news-and-features/why-dry-skin-winter>

For more advice visit your local pharmacy.

