

## How to take care of your skin

Taking care of your skin is important for your overall health. Your skin is a crucial barrier that keeps out infection. Glands in your skin make natural oils that help keep your skin hydrated. When your skin loses hydration (eg through excessive bathing/washing/scrubbing, or living in dry climates like Alberta in the winter!), your skin can become dry and itchy and rashes can develop. Take care of your skin to prevent this!

- ◆ Keep showers/baths short and tepid (not too warm!). Aim for less than 10-15 minutes. Don't bathe more than once a day.
- ◆ Use a mild soap with no fragrances or dyes (eg Dove or Ivory), or use a cleanser such as Cetaphil or Cerave. Use soap only on hands and dirty areas (eg underarms, feet, groin). The water from the shower/bath is enough to clean the rest of your body.
- ◆ After bathing/showering, pat dry with a towel (do not scrub with the towel).
- ◆ Immediately (within 3 minutes) after getting out of the bath/shower, apply thick moisturizing cream all over your body, especially areas that are often dry (eg hands) to seal in hydration. This cream should also have no fragrances or dyes (ie they are white or clear, and are thick enough so that they do not run out of the container when you turn it upside-down). Here are some you could try:
  - ◆ CeraVe cream
  - ◆ Cetaphil cream
  - ◆ George's cream
  - ◆ Glaxal base
  - ◆ Vaseline Intensive Care Problem Skin Therapy or Vaseline jelly (petroleum jelly)
  - ◆ For infants <4 months of age we recommend an edible oil, such as olive oil
- ◆ Think about other things that encounter your skin. Choose products that are free of fragrances and dyes.
  - ◆ What kind of soap, deodorant, shampoo, conditioner, and body wash do you use? (We do not recommend body wash – use a mild soap/cleanser as above)
  - ◆ What kind of laundry detergent do you use? Tide laundry detergent is irritating for many people with sensitive skin, but Tide Free & Gentle may work better for you. You could also try double rinsing your clothes.
  - ◆ Do not use fabric softeners or dryer sheets.
  - ◆ Avoid scented body lotions and perfumes; these can irritate your skin.
- ◆ Using a humidifier at home can also help