



Dr. McGoey's Bleach Bath Handout

What is a Bleach Bath? A bleach bath is a bath with a small amount of regular household bleach added to the water which may help lessen the symptoms of chronic eczema (atopic dermatitis).

Increased amounts of bacteria on the skin often accompany eczema and other skin conditions, which can worsen symptoms and cause flares. A bleach bath decreases the amount of bacteria on the skin, which may improve certain skin conditions, reducing itching, redness, and scaling, and may also minimize skin infections. When used for eczema, bleach baths are most effective when combined with other eczema treatments, such as medications and moisturizers.

If properly diluted and used as directed, a bleach bath is safe for both children and adults.

Instructions:

- Add 1/4 cup of regular household bleach to a half filled bath tub, or 1/2 cup of bleach to a full bath tub. Water should be warm but not hot.
- Soak the limbs and torso or just the affected areas of skin for five to 10 minutes. Do not submerge the head.
- Rinse briefly with showerhead after tub has drained. Then pat skin dry and immediately apply moisturizer.
- Take a bleach bath twice a week or as directed by Dr. McGoey.
- A bleach bath can cause skin dryness if too much bleach is used or if the bath is done too often. If your skin is cracked or extremely dry, any bath - including a bleach bath - may be painful. Discuss any treatment problems with Dr. McGoey.