

WET DRESSINGS

HEMOCARE GUIDELINE[®]

WHAT ARE WET DRESSINGS?

Wet dressings:

- Help keep moisture in the skin and allow the skin to heal.
- Cool the skin down, reduce the itching and associated symptoms and make it more comfortable.
- Improve the penetration of steroid cream to be absorbed into the skin.
- Provide a protective barrier against scratching due to itch.
- Promote healing and support anti-infective treatment where present.

Most children have wet dressings for a period of five days or until their skin has significantly improved. The dressings are usually changed 2-3 times per day.

WHAT DO YOU NEED?

- Steroid cream or ointment (as ordered by the doctor).
- Moisturising cream (as ordered by the doctor).
- Clean cotton sheets or long sleeve/long leg 100% cotton pyjamas (not flannelette). Commercially made wet dressing garments can be purchased to aid with wet dressings if desired, e.g. Tubifast® garments.
- Clean bandages.
- Clean elastic Tubifast bandage (*this is optional as it is expensive*) alternatively you can use tights and a Tee Shirt.
- Bandages are secured by tucking them in and covering with Tubifast or similar cotton stretch bandaging.
- A bowl filled with clean warm water.
- If the child is small or upset, it will be necessary for you to have the assistance of another adult to help hold or distract the child during the dressing.

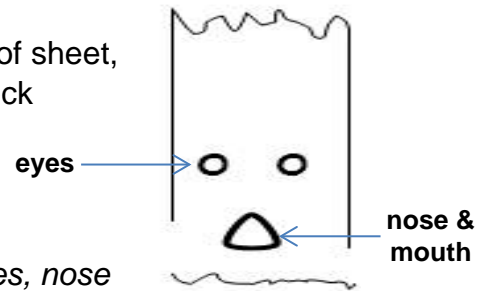
WHAT YOU NEED TO DO:

1. Cut up cotton sheets or cotton material and have the bandages rolled before your child gets into the bath. Sheets should be cut to fit each limb and area of the body, so that the sheet will cover all of the skin. You may choose to use 100% cotton pyjamas instead. Prepare all of your equipment before starting such as creams, linen, bandages and Tubifast

2. If the head needs a dressing too, use a long piece of sheet, which will reach from the front to the back of the neck

3. Cut holes for the eyes, nose and mouth.

It is important that the sheet does not cover the eyes, nose or mouth.



Example of Face

4. Give your child a 2-3 minute warm bath once a day before one of the dressings. Your doctor may recommend using a bath oil (QV Bath Oil is commonly used). Occasionally your doctor may order bleach baths for your child. This helps with any underlying infection. Follow the instructions on the factsheet carefully, remembering to only use unscented laundry bleach in the quantities prescribed.
5. Gently pat the skin with a soft cotton towel without fully drying or rubbing the skin. Rubbing the skin can cause further damage.
6. Soak the cotton sheets/cotton pyjamas in a bowl of warm water.

When using sheets: *apply the creams and wet dressing to one part of the body at a time.*

When using pyjamas: *apply the creams and wet dressing to half of the body at a time.*

7. Rub a small amount of steroid cream into areas of skin, which are red, lumpy, broken or scabby. Apply just enough cream so the skin shines.
8. Apply a generous amount of moisturising cream over the top of the steroid cream to the entire limb or body part.

Note: Different steroid creams and ointments may be used for the body and face.

9. Cover one part of the body with sheets or pyjamas, which have been gently wrung out. These should not be dripping but wet enough that they remain damp until the next dressing.
10. Wrap the bandages around the limb/ body firmly, but not too tight that it may impede circulation or be uncomfortable and secure bandage by tucking it in. Continue to repeat process until the whole body is covered.

11. Put the clean elastic tubular bandage over the top of the bandages to keep the dressings in place. Dress your child normally, taking care not to overdress.

IMPORTANT POINTS TO REMEMBER

- Never cover the eyes, nose or mouth with dressings.
- For infants less than 2 years, remove the head dressing at night to reduce the risk of SIDS. Re-apply moisturiser if the child wakes overnight for a feed.
- Apply only small amounts of steroid cream to the affected areas and as the skin improves, reduce the amount of steroids used.
- Ensure you apply either cream or ointment as prescribed by your doctor. Sheets, cotton pyjamas, bandages and elastic tubular bandages should be washed after every use with a sensitive or hypoallergenic laundry detergent on the hot water cycle of your washing machine.
- Putting the elastic tubular bandage and bandages in the drier will shorten how long they will last. It is preferable to let them air dry, out of direct sunlight if possible.
- Playing children's music, singing songs, watching TV or playing games while doing the dressing may make it a more relaxed and pleasant time for everyone.
- Try to time the dressings for a time when the child is not tired or hungry if possible.
- When removing creams from the jar always use a wooden spatula or plastic spoon. Always use separate creams and ointments for different family members to prevent cross-infection.
- Remember, if you have everything you need for the dressing prepared and set up in readiness, the length of time to attend to the dressing will be much less and will cause less distress to your child.

DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS:

Creams:

Face Steroid: _____

Body Steroid: _____

Moisturiser: _____