
Dilute Bleach Baths for Eczema

Dilute bleach baths are used to treat eczema in adults and children. A small amount of bleach added to bathwater can lessen itchiness, pain, and infections. Dilute bleach baths help because eczema is often worsened by bacterial infections on the skin. A bleach bath can kill bacteria on the skin which can help with itchiness and pain. Please talk to your functional medicine doctor before trying a dilute bleach bath for you, or your child.

Dilute Bleach Bath Instructions

1. Only use household bleach, which contains 5-8% sodium hypochlorite (the main ingredient in bleach).
2. For an average-size bathtub, add ½ cup bleach to a fully filled tub. If the tub is half-filled, ¼ cup bleach is enough.
3. If soaking hands, or using a baby or toddler bathtub, use 1 tablespoon of bleach per gallon of water.
4. Soak in the bathtub, or affected areas for 5-10 minutes.
5. Rinse off. This is very important if your skin is sensitive or you are new to dilute bleach baths.
6. Moisturize and apply topical medication, as directed.

Do not use water that is very hot as this may cause irritation. If soaking your entire body in the bathtub, be careful to avoid getting bleach in your hair, or on your face.

Your functional medicine clinician will advise on how often you should use a bleach bath. Some people bathe a few times a week, and others may need to bathe more frequently depending on the severity and location of their eczema.

REFERENCES

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3. Majewski S, Bhattacharya T, Asztalos M, Bohaty B, Durham KC, West DP, Hebert AA, Paller AS. Sodium hypochlorite body wash in the management of Staphylococcus aureus-colonized moderate-to-severe atopic dermatitis in infants, children, and adolescents. *Pediatr Dermatol*. 2019 Jul;36(4):442-447. doi: 10.1111/pde.13842.