

BABY BASICS

Caring For Baby's Skin

(NAPSA)—Many parents have found it can be surprisingly easy to care for and keep their baby's skin soft.

Parents quickly learn that everyday triggers, from change in weather to itchy fabrics to fragranced detergents, can cause their baby's delicate skin to become dry and irritated. That's because a baby's skin is more fragile than adult skin and it's also less oily.

Oils on the skin create a helpful barrier and without it a baby's skin is less resistant to bacteria and irritating substances in the environment. Once that happens, the result can be diaper rash, chapped, raw skin, even eczema. The bottom line is to keep skin protected and treat it gently when it's irritated.

Here are a few tips for parents to keep in mind from pediatrician Dr. Sanders Lipman:

- Dress your baby in soft, loose-fitting clothing to minimize friction against the skin. Avoid rough, coarse or tight fabrics, especially if the temperature is hot. If baby's skin is really sensitive, Dr. Lipman suggests that parents also wash their clothes with a perfume-free, dye-free and hypoallergenic detergent.

- Children often experience facial irritations caused by runny noses, drooling and even wind-burn. To relieve and even prevent irritated skin, apply a moisturizing, healing ointment such as Aquaphor. "I consider Aquaphor the chapped cheek syndrome formula," says Dr. Lipman. "It protects skin while it soothes and moisturizes."

- A full bath need only be given two to three times a week, not daily. However, it is a good



Because delicate baby skin is easy to irritate, experts suggest using a fragrance-free baby wash.

idea to wash the face and behind the ears, neck, hands and bottom on a daily basis. Don't use soap on baby's face.

- During baby's bath time, Dr. Lipman suggests using a gentle baby cleanser, not soaps. The most important attribute of a baby wash is that it's free of fragrances, which could increase the likelihood of irritating a baby's skin. Pediatricians trust Aquaphor's Gentle Wash because it's not only free of dyes and fragrances, it even has a nondrying, soap-free formula that easily rinses clean with no residue.

- Ten percent of babies experience atopic dermatitis, also known as eczema, resulting in extremely dry, itchy patches on the face, scalp and diaper area. To calm extremely dry skin, pediatricians recommend the "soak n' seal" solution: Simply bathe in lukewarm water for about 15 minutes and immediately after, apply a heavy moisturizer, such as Eucerin Creme, to damp skin to lock in lasting moisturization.

A child's sensitive skin requires extra attention and care. These skin savers can help to keep skin healthy and soft.