## Environmental and personal care products for families and carers - smell and chemical sensitivity

### SKIN & TEETH CLEANING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SOAP</strong> – not suitable for sensitive skin and <em>definitely not to be used on infants and children with dry skin or eczema</em>&lt;br&gt;<em>CHOOSE a brand without added perfume or fragrance</em>&lt;br&gt;Some examples of plain fragrance-free soaps are: Simple soap, Dove (fragrance-free), QV Bar, Dermaveen Cleansing Bar, Just Soap, Redwin Unperfumed Sorbolene Moisturising Bar</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>OATMEAL BATH</strong> – To relieve itchy skin – not recommended for infants and young children with broken skin and known allergies&lt;br&gt;<em>Dermaveen Oatmeal Bath Treatment</em>&lt;br&gt;You can make your own oatmeal bath by putting some rolled oats tied in a stocking and swished in the bath water</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SHAMPOO</strong> – not suitable for children with eczema&lt;br&gt;There are very few perfume-free, non-foaming choices apart from using the soap-free washes such as Cetaphil and QV Wash&lt;br&gt;The next best option is to choose shampoo and conditioner with a low level fragrance and check for tolerance&lt;br&gt;Some health food stores may have suitable brands&lt;br&gt;The Soap Kitchen in King Street Newtown has a range of products that are usually tolerated <em><a href="http://www.soapkitchen.com.au">www.soapkitchen.com.au</a></em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>DEODORANTS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>AVOID all spray deodorants&lt;br&gt;<em>CHOOSE a fragrance-free roll-on or stick variety. Many manufacturers now produce a suitable product</em>&lt;br&gt;Available brands include: Ego QV, Simple, Nivea &amp; Mitchum</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOOTHPASTE</strong></td>
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<td>AVOID brands with added flavours&lt;br&gt;All brands contain some preservative to avoid mould or fungus growth in a cream product that is always exposed to the air&lt;br&gt;<em>Soul Pattinson’s Plain Toothpaste</em>&lt;br&gt;available from Soul Pattinson pharmacies&lt;br&gt;<em>Oral Hygiene Solutions Plain Toothpaste</em> - available by mail order from <em><a href="http://www.plaintoothpaste.com">www.plaintoothpaste.com</a></em></td>
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### CLOTHES WASHING

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>LAUNDRY</strong> – Avoid brands with odours&lt;br&gt;<em>Omo Sensitive&lt;br&gt;Planet Ark&lt;br&gt;Lux&lt;br&gt;Amway</em>&lt;br&gt;<em>AVOID all fabric softeners and commercial spray starches</em>&lt;br&gt;<em>CLOTHES DRYERS</em> – make sure that the moisture from the clothes is ducted externally – moisture that comes back into the house causes mould growth and dust mite. Clothes need to be very dry before storage</td>
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### FOR SENSITIVE SKIN

Choose clothing made from cotton or Dermasilk® that has a smooth surface (not ribbed) and check for any roughness from seams and tags<br>Wash all clothing a couple of times to remove the fabric finish before being worn for the first time<br>Wash dirty spots with perfume-free soap or mild detergent first and then do the machine-wash with plain water
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## HOUSEHOLD CLEANING

### VENTILATION
Keep windows open at all times to avoid a build-up of odours, mites, moisture and moulds in the indoor environment. Fans help to keep air moving in a room.

Clear any clutter that inhibits good airflow into all corners of a room – keep toys in covered boxes and books inside cabinets with doors.

### VACUUM CLEANING
Use a good vacuum cleaner with a HEPA (high efficiency particle arrester) filter if there are any allergies or likelihood of asthma.

### FLOOR CLEANING
Clean floors with a mop and use a small amount of fragrance-free detergent. Floor surfaces that can be mopped are best. Carpets hold moisture, dust, food, animal, mould and dust mite allergen particles and allow moulds and dust mite to breed.

### TOILET and BATH CLEANING
Use brushes and special cleaning cloths rather than chemicals to clean sinks, baths and toilets. Vinegar and bicarbonate of soda can be used as cleaning agents.

## AIRCONDITIONING, HEATING & COOKING

### AIR CONDITIONERS
Choose a ducted or split system refrigerated cooling type of air conditioner. Avoid evaporative air-conditioners if there is a family history of asthma or your child has allergies. These add moisture to the indoor air that breeds moulds and dust mite.

Clean filters from airconditioners frequently – different filter sizes will trap different size particles – many will trap dust mites but not the very small allergenic dust particles.

### HEATING
Gas heaters – Avoid unflued gas heaters – if leaky the gases have no odour but they are powerful airway irritants.

Column heaters – while these are benign form of heating, pay attention to ventilation as heating will increase odours coming off furniture etc.

### COOKING
Gas cooktops increase indoor levels of carbon monoxide and nitrogen dioxide. Always turn on overhead exhaust fans while cooking. Check the exhaust above the cooktop to see that it vents the exhaust to the outside. If not find out about the capacity of the filter to absorb particles, moisture and gases.

When cooking, food particles become airborne attached to water or fat and later deposited in dust. This is especially important for those with fish, wheat and egg allergies as a trigger for allergy reactions in skin and airway.

## INDOOR ODOURS
Young children are most at risk of asthma and middle ear disease from exposure chemical irritants but sensitive adults can react to strong smells.

Avoid using any form of air-freshener in the home or car.

Avoid wearing perfumes/fragrances.

Avoid moving into freshly renovated houses or rooms – the odours from paint, glue, new wood, new furniture and new carpet contain irritant chemicals for airways and

Avoid craft activities indoors if smelly paints or glues are being used.

Avoid using aromatic oils or burning perfumed candles for “aromatherapy” or to make the air smell nice.

Avoid using moth balls & cedar oils.

Avoid smoking cigarettes – Note it is not only the smoke from cigarettes that has an irritant effect on airways but also the residual odours in clothing and furniture.

Avoid heavy perfumes used inside the home or car.

New books need to be aired.

## GERM KILLING AGENTS
Avoid using triclosan® unless there is an infection and it is necessary for treatment – although effective it is not bio-degradable and the widespread use is likely to have ecological consequences.

### INDOOR PLANTS
Can be both a problem and useful.

**Harmful effects**
- leaves may be poisonous if consumed by pets and small children
- increase indoor humidity
- mould spores may breed in soil

**Positive effects**
- Help with maintaining air freshness by taking up CO₂

## DRY CLEANING
For dry cleaned clothes & furnishings, remove plastic and air outdoors until the chemicals have evaporated.

## CAR TRAVEL
When driving in city traffic it is hard to avoid pollution – air-conditioning with a good filter may help.

AVOID filling the petrol tank when sensitive children are in the car.
### Environmental and personal care products for families and carers - smell and chemical sensitivity

**SKIN CARE**

**MOISTURISERS** – Choose one that is fragrance-free and doesn’t sting. For children with broken skin, washing and the application of water-based products cause discomfort, stress and aversion-related behaviour problems with treatment.

For children with eczema and food allergy or if you have a child with food allergy – check the product is free from nut oils.

For very dry skin use an ointment rather than a cream – moisturisers should be applied very gently (not rubbed in vigorously) at least three times a day.

Dermaveen Moisturising Lotion
Dermeze Ointment
Emulsifying Ointment
Eucerin
Hydroderm
QV Moisturising Lotion
Sorbolene

Fragrances and botanical products are the most common cosmetic ingredients to cause skin reactions that may be localized to the site of contact or a generalized rash reaction.

**SUNSCREENS**

Look for products that are free from fragrances and do not contain nut oils, PABA or menthol. All creams must contain some form of preservative.

Cancer Council Sunscreens
Ego Sunsense Low Irritant
Ego Sunsense Toddler Milk
Hamilton’s Sunscreen
Soul Pattinson’s Ultrablock
ZinClear™ - a clear version of traditional zinc cream

**TOPICAL CORTICOSTEROID PREPARATIONS**

Ointments are preferred for most rashes as they contain no preservatives and are less likely to sting when being applied.

Note – only very mild preparations are available without prescriptions.

Contact dermatitis reactions can occur to topical corticosteroid preparations – patch test for diagnosis.

**NON-STEROIDAL TOPICAL MEDICATION FOR ECZEMA**

Elidel® (prescription)

**MAKE-UP**

There may not be any suitable products on the market for very sensitive skin. Products labelled as low allergy or hypoallergenic have only to be suitable for 90% of the population to carry that product claim.

All liquid preparations contain natural or added preservatives. Foundations have to be pretty robust to cope with frequent opening, expected shelf-life and the very warm temperatures in storage places.

The expensive process of trial and error is the only way of finding suitable products.

If you care for a baby with eczema or dry skin check the ingredient list of lipsticks, lip care products, moisturisers, shampoos, conditioners, shaving creams and make-up for nut, milk and egg products.

Compare prices for skin treatments at on-line pharmacies.

**DISPOSABLE NAPPIES** – Avoid brands with any fragrance.


Huggies® suit most but not all children with sensitive skin.

**NAPPY RASH TREATMENTS**

Many nappy rash treatments contain castor oil, zinc and pharmacy grade peanut oil. It is not known if they are a source of nut sensitisation.

Products containing an antifungal agent and a low dose of a corticosteroid will treat infection and redness. A liberal application after each nappy change will be needed to treat the rash.

Suitable non-medication products free from nut oils -

Duncan’s Ointment [diacaf@iinet.net.au](mailto:diacaf@iinet.net.au)


Eucerin

Lansinoh – 100% ultra pure lanolin
# Supplements

## VITAMINS & FOLIC ACID

**Multivitamins**
- Avoid products with flavours, artificial colours, bioflavonoids, herbs, rutin, kelp or hesperidin
- Suitable products include:
  - Amcal One-a-Day
  - Macro Multi M
- Take one supplement daily for adults and about three per week for children if the intake of fruit and vegetables is restricted to less than the recommended amounts

**For Pregnant & Lactating Women**
- Elevit
- FabFOL PLUS
- Avoid taking products with high dose Vitamin A in pregnancy

**Folic Acid**
- Alphapharm Megafol
- Golden Glow Folic Acid
- I-Folic

**Vitamin D₃** – Vitamin D is required daily for healthy bones so a supplement is necessary if there is no sun access

- Blackmore’s Vitamin D₃ Healthy Bones (contains sodium sulphite so may not be suitable for all sensitive individuals)

## Vitamin C

- Intakes of Vitamin C > 600 mg per day may be harmful for some people.
- Bioglan Cal C
- Herb Valley Vitamin C
- Golden Glow Calcium Ascorbate
- Melrose Calcium Ascorbate
- Melrose Sodium Ascorbate
- Ascorbate powders are useful to add to syrups and jams as a preservative

## Calcium

- Caltrate (600 mg)
- Herron Calcium Plus with Magnesium
- FAB Cal – 200 mg (available after June 2007)
- Golden Glow Calcium & Magnesium Chelate (250 mg)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE GROUP</th>
<th>Nutrient reference value (mg/day) for Calcium</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 – 6 months</td>
<td>200 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 – 12 months</td>
<td>270 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 – 3 years</td>
<td>500 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 – 8 years</td>
<td>700 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 – 13 years</td>
<td>1000 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 – 18 years</td>
<td>1300 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 – 50 years</td>
<td>1000 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 50 years</td>
<td>1300 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pregnancy</td>
<td>1000 mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lactation</td>
<td>1000 mg</td>
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## Iron

- Children’s needs increase from 5 mg a day in infancy to 10 mg a day in older children and men. Adult women have about double the need of men while menstruating and almost treble with pregnancy
- FAB Iron & Vitamin B Complex (5 mg elemental iron)
- FGF Abbott (80 mg of elemental iron but contains lactose and gluten)

## Carbohydrate Supplements

- Poly Joule Powder (maltodextrin, gluten-free)
- Glucodin Powder (powdered glucose)

## Milk- Based Supplements

- Pediasure Powder Vanilla (gluten-free)
- Ensure Powder Vanilla
- Sustagen Sport Vanilla

Compare prices for supplements at online pharmacies
### Medications

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<tr>
<th>PAIN RELIEF</th>
<th>ANTIHISTAMINES</th>
<th>AIRWAY</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Paracetamol tablets</strong> 500 mg – e.g. Herron, Amcal, Panadol&lt;br&gt;<em>Panadol Suppositories</em> 125 mg, 250 mg&lt;br&gt;The usual dose for children is 15-20 mg/kilogram per dose – less than this does not reach the therapeutic threshold and will not have any effect. Take care not to overdose overweight children – dose should be adjusted down to that for an appropriate weight for age.&lt;br&gt;For children the dose should not exceed 60mg/kilogram body weight per 24 hours so if a dose of 20mg/kg is given then this dose can be given 3 times in 24 hours&lt;br&gt;Avoid liquid Paracetamol preparations as they are coloured &amp;/or flavoured unless tolerance has been tested for these additives.&lt;br&gt;Codeine is usually well-tolerated. Use <em>Panadeine®</em> if a stronger type of pain-relief is required.</td>
<td><strong>H1 antihistamines are used to treat and prevent hives and skin, eye and airway allergy reactions</strong>&lt;br&gt;Choose tablets where possible. Each formulation has a different range of actions so it is important to test which suits you best.&lt;br&gt;<strong>NON-SEDATING ANTIHISTAMINES</strong>&lt;br&gt;*Claratyne&lt;br&gt;Telfast&lt;br&gt;Zyrtec ® (non-sedating in most people)&lt;br&gt;Zyrtec Oral Liquid Drops for children&lt;br&gt;SEDATING ANTIHISTAMINES&lt;br&gt;The degree of the sedating effect is highly variable. The liquids contain colour and flavour. This is usually tolerated in children with eczema&lt;br&gt;*Polaramine&lt;br&gt;Phenergan&lt;br&gt;Vallergan &amp; Vallergan Forte&lt;br&gt;The use of sedating antihistamines under the age of two years is not generally recommended. However, in practice, babies with severe itch with eczema need some relief and <em>Polaramine</em> and <em>Phenergan</em> are well-tolerated. The dose should be discussed with your doctor.</td>
<td><strong>SALINE SOLUTIONS</strong> – buffered for the nose&lt;br&gt;*Narium Nasal Spray, Fess Nasal Spray&lt;br&gt;<strong>ORAL DECONGESTANTS</strong>&lt;br&gt;*Demazin Cough and Cold Butterscotch 200ml (2 years to adult) – butterscotch/vanilla flavour with no added colour or preservative (prescription item)&lt;br&gt;<strong>TOPICAL DECONGESTANTS</strong>&lt;br&gt;*Drixine Nasal, Otrivin&lt;br&gt;<strong>TOPICAL ANTIHISTAMINE SPRAYS</strong>&lt;br&gt;*Azep Hayfever Relief&lt;br&gt;<strong>TOPICAL CORTICOSTEROID SPRAYS for the nose</strong>&lt;br&gt;*Beconase, Rhinocort (32 mcg/dose) and <em>Telnase</em> are available over the counter&lt;br&gt;*Nasonex Aqueous Nasal Spray and Rhinocort (64 mcg/dose) are available on prescription&lt;br&gt;<strong>ASTHMA MEDICATIONS</strong>&lt;br&gt;Always use asthma medications as prescribed. Metered dose inhaler(MDI) devices must be used with a mask and spacer for optimal medication delivery&lt;br&gt;Avoid cough lollies and syrups and medications, mouthwash or inhalations that contain Menthol, Mint, Camphor, Eucalyptus and Tea tree oil as these may make you feel better but they have no therapeutic effect and can be powerful irritants</td>
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# Medications

<table>
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<tr>
<th>REFUX</th>
<th>LAXATIVES</th>
<th>HEAD LICE AND WORMS</th>
<th>ANAESTHETICS</th>
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</table>
| **Medications to treat symptomatic reflux**  
*Infant Gaviscon Powder* (contains magnesium alginate and sodium alginate)  
H2 antihistamines - *Zantac* tablets 150 mg (ranitidine) are available over the counter - The dose for children is 1 to 3 mg/kilogram body weight/dose up to 8 hourly – discuss the dose regimen with your doctor if liquid not tolerated  
Proton Pump Inhibitors (require a prescription) - *Losec* 10 mg or 20 mg tablets – the dose should be discussed with the treating doctor (Omeprazole reversibly reduces gastric acid secretion the final step of the gastric acid formation. The effect is dose dependent acid secretion is inhibited irrespective of the stimulus to acid production. Omeprazole has no effect on acetylcholine or histamine receptors so combination treatment may be necessary)  
**Constipation is a sign of a problem in the gastrointestinal tract**  
*Duphalac*-lactulose  
*Actilax* - lactulose  
*Movicol* - Macrogol 3350 (this substance is virtually unchanged in the gut and has no known pharmacological activity. Sachets have a citrus flavour but the plain powder is available from compounding pharmacies.  
Liquid Paraffin – oil that is not digested *Parachoc* – the flavour is vanilla and chocolate and is mostly tolerated.  
Fibres that add water to the bowel motions  
*Benefiber* (guar gum)  
*Metamucil Original Texture Regular Flavour Powder* (Psyllium husk powder)  
*Normacol Plus* (sterolcia & frangula bark)  
*Gold Cross Epsom Salts* - recommended dose is on the packet (about 2 teaspoons for adults)  
*Glycerin Suppositories* – contain glycerol and suitable for infants, children and adults as a temporary measure  
| **HEAD LICE (NITS)**  
Before resorting to insecticidal shampoos to get rid of nits you can try  
Using a nit comb  
Suffocating the lice by oiling the hair thickly with pharmacy grade olive oil or soft paraffin (e.g. *Vaseline*) – the oil or paraffin needs to be left in for a few hours  
Drying the hair with a hair dryer – the hot hair from a standard dryer may be enough to kill the nits but some skill is required to avoid burning the scalp with the dryer  
Nits don’t survive well away from humans – treat soft toys and bedding as for dust mites  
For internet information about head lice [www.hsph.harvard.edu/headlice.html](http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/headlice.html)  
**WORMS**  
*Combamin Tablets* –these are orange but provide the least dose of problem chemical of all the available choices. Remember to treat all the family and the dogs and cats simultaneously and pin the tops and bottoms of pyjamas to avoid the cycle of bottom to hand to mouth reinfection.  
| **DENTAL ANAESTHESIA**  
Ask for plain lignocaine – avoid the dental local anaesthetics with adrenaline and octopressin as they contain preservative  
**ENDOSCOPY**  
The agents used to sedate for endoscopy are usually well tolerated  
**GENERAL ANAESTHETICS**  
Avoid the premedication as these agents sometimes cause adverse reactions  
The gases used for general anaesthetics are usually well tolerated by those with allergies and intolerances  

Sometimes just simple thickening of feeds with some maize cornflour will be enough to help. Mix a tablespoon of cornflour with a cup of water and cook while stirring in a pot and add an amount to formula to make the milk “thicker”  
Prune juice is not suitable to give to those with food intolerance as it contains high levels of natural chemicals that cause reactions in most people with food intolerance