

## SLEEP TIPS

Sleep is essential for healthy living, however trying to get a good night's sleep can be a nightmare for people with severe eczema. The intense desire can make sleep cycles short and inconsistent, leading to negative effects on one's physical and mental wellbeing.

The good news is a quality sleep does not need to remain out of reach just because you have severe eczema. Follow these handy bedtime hints to give yourself the best chance of getting the sleep you need to be at your best.



### 1 Stay Cool

With body temperature and eczema closely related, it is essential to monitor temperature levels in your room when you go to bed. The hotter a person becomes, the worse their eczema tends to be. Turn down air-conditioners by 3-5°C and turn off heaters in winter. Automated temperature systems can also be programmed to decrease room temperature at certain times during the night.



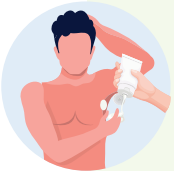
### 2 Choose Soothing Linens

Clean, soft linens made of breathable fabrics are best for people with eczema. Dust mites are a common trigger for eczema and, as such, it is best to use protective dust mite covers for pillows and mattresses. It is also important to frequently wash bedding. Doonas, blankets and quilts made from materials that can be easily laundered are best, with fabrics that are 100% cotton or bamboo a great option.



### 3 Reduce Scratching

Bedtime is a peak period for unintentional scratching. Reduce the risk of skin damage by keeping nails trimmed and neat. Soft cotton gloves are also helpful in cutting down the incidence of skin damage through unintentional scratching.



### 4 Apply Moisturiser

Going to sleep with dry skin is a sure-fire way to increase the risk of waking during the night. Applying thick moisturiser to affected areas up to an hour before bedtime allows the ointment to better sink into the skin. It is also a good idea to moisturise immediately after bathing while the skin is still damp to lock in the moisture.



### 5 Wear Suitable Sleepwear

Just like the fabrics on your bed, the clothes you wear can affect sleep. Avoid fabrics that are rough, scratchy or tight. Pyjamas that are airy, loose and breathable are best for absorbing moisture. Those made of 100% cotton or bamboo are generally a winner. Remember, to prevent sweating, by wearing an appropriate number of items.



### 6 Little Sleepers

Children with eczema should, ideally, sleep in their own beds to avoid the risk of overheating. It is understandable at times, there may be a need for co-sleeping to manage damaging scratching. Wet dressings can be applied just before bed and left on all night if your child is sleeping. If they do wake, remove the dressing if it is dry and apply a layer of moisturising cream before returning them to bed in their pyjamas.



### 7 Bigger Sleepers

A doctor may prescribe an antihistamine at night for older children until their eczema or sleeping patterns improve. However, they can cause drowsiness and should not be used routinely or for children younger than two.

## The Impact

Studies have shown people with eczema have:

- A higher chance of fatigue, daytime sleepiness and insomnia.
- Behavioural issues related to poor sleep, particularly among youngsters.
- Greater incidences of sick days and doctor visits related to disturbed sleep.
- An increased risk of sleep-related psychological disorders and workplace accidents.
- A higher chance of worsening eczema due to poor sleep.

## About Us

Eczema Support Australia provides support to Australians who are significantly impacted by chronic eczema. The registered charity believes all families and individuals living with these chronic conditions deserve our community support and is guided by the three pillars of:

**1. Advocacy 2. Connection 3. Information**