

HAND DERMATITIS TREATMENT

1. The most important part of your treatment is to apply a mild cortisone medicine to your hands many times a day. You should apply the medicine after each hand washing and as often at other times as possible--at least 15 times each day. Apply the medicine very thinly to the rash and massage it in well. If you wish, you can apply the medicine to your whole hand like a hand cream. The medicine may be a lotion, cream or ointment of 1% hydrocortisone. You may also be instructed to use a more potent cortisone once or twice a day if your rash is very inflamed.
2. Do *not* apply any cream, lotion or ointment to your hands except the one prescribed for you. One exception: If your skin is still too dry, you may apply plain white petrolatum (Vaseline) or other very bland lubricants thinly *after* rubbing in your medicine.
3. When washing your hands, use lukewarm water and a very small amount of mild soap. Rinse the soap off well and dry gently. Then apply a little medicine and massage it in well.
4. Pamper your hands by following the hand protection instructions.
5. When your rash is *much* better, you may use the medicine less often. However, you should apply the medicine at least four times a day until your skin has healed completely.
6. Continue applying the medicine until your skin is completely normal. Pamper your hands for at least four months after healing. It takes a long time for skin to recover from prolonged inflammation.
7. Hand dermatitis is stubborn. If your hand rash improves at first and then worsens, it usually means you need to use your medicine more often.
8. Hand dermatitis often recurs. If your hand rash comes back, you need to apply the medicine often and pamper your hands.
9. Cortisones keep for years at room temperature. As long as the prescriptions are refillable, take the original container to your pharmacist for a refill when you need more medicine. If you've used up all of the authorized refills, please make an appointment for a checkup. If these measures fail, please return for a re-evaluation.

