

Looking After Your Skin

Dry Skin and Itching

Many older people suffer from dry spots on their skin, often on their lower legs, elbows, and lower arms. Dry skin patches feel rough and scaly. There are many possible reasons for dry skin such as not drinking enough liquids, spending too much time in the sun or sun tanning, smoking and stress.

Dry skin also can be caused by health problems, such as diabetes or kidney disease. Using too much soap, antiperspirant, or perfume and taking hot baths can make dry skin worse.

Some medicines can make skin itchy. Because older people have thinner skin, scratching can cause bleeding that may lead to infection. Talk to your doctor if your skin is very dry and itchy.

To help dry skin use moisturizers, like lotions, creams, or ointments, every day or try using a

Humidifier.

The Perfect Bath

Replace your bar soap with a gentle, creamy, fragrance-free cleanser or emollient.

Use warm (not hot) water. Hot water strips skin of its natural oils, which can increase skin dryness.

Use a soft cloth to wash your skin. A buff puff or bath brush can irritate your skin.

Keep your bath or shower short. You may find that you don't need to bathe every day. When you bathe, keep it short. Take a 10-minute bath or shower.

Pat water gently from your skin after bathing but leave a bit of water on your skin. Having some water on your skin when you apply moisturizer (next step) helps hydrate your skin.



Checking Your Skin

Check Moles, Birthmarks, or Other Parts of the Skin for the "ABCDE's"

A = Asymmetry (one half of the growth looks different from the other half)

B = Borders that are irregular

C = Colour changes or more than one colour

D = Diameter greater than the size of a pencil eraser

E = Evolving; this means the growth changes in size, shape, symptoms (itching, tenderness), surface (especially bleeding), or shades of colour

See your doctor if you have any of these signs



Wear gloves while doing housework and gardening. Working around your house and in your garden can expose your skin to harsh chemicals, sunlight, and other things that can irritate and dry your skin