

“Soak and smear” instructions

When skin is very red and inflamed all over, or itching is very severe, occasionally a “soak and smear” treatment is necessary. This treatment is a great way to decrease inflammation in the skin, without putting someone on oral or intramuscular corticosteroids like prednisone or Kenalog.

Soaking and Smearing

This treatment can be messy since it requires the use of ointments slathered all over the entire body. It requires wearing long sleeves and long pants to bed. If you do not have any old long pajamas to use, find something that is soft and covers all of the skin (such as these long johns for [men](#), [women](#), or [kids](#)). You may also want to use old sheets that you don't mind getting greasy since the ointments can leave grease stains on clothing and sheets (if you are trying to get these stains out, try [Carbena stain devils for fat and cooking oil](#)).

How to do the soaking and the smearing:

1. Just prior to bed, soak in a bath or shower in plain water for 5-10 minutes (use a timer). If you need to soap the diaper area in a child, or armpits/feet/groin in an adult, then only use soaps such as [Trader Joe's Honey Oatmeal soap](#) or [Vanicream gentle skin cleanser](#). To wash the hair, stick with something free and clear such as [Vanicream shampoo and conditioner](#)
 2. Without drying the skin, smear with _____ ointment. (It is normal for this to feel greasy and wet and even a little gross)
 3. Immediately put on long johns and head to bed.
 4. Do this each day before bed for _____ days
 5. After waking up, use _____ ointment or cream to the worst areas and apply [Vaseline](#) or [Vanicream](#) to the rest of the body
- For hand or foot soaking and smearing, do the above, but soak only the hands or feet for 5-10 minutes. Smear as a above, and then apply cotton [gloves](#) or [socks](#) to wear to sleep.