



## Swimming with atopic eczema: options and recommendations

Swimming can be a great activity for children with atopic eczema if appropriate precautions are taken. Regular skin care and monitoring the child's reactions to different environments and activities is key to minimising irritation and worsening eczema. Working with doctors and specialists can help parents find the best practices for managing their child's atopic eczema.

## TRIGGERS OF ATOPIC ECZEMA IN CHILDREN

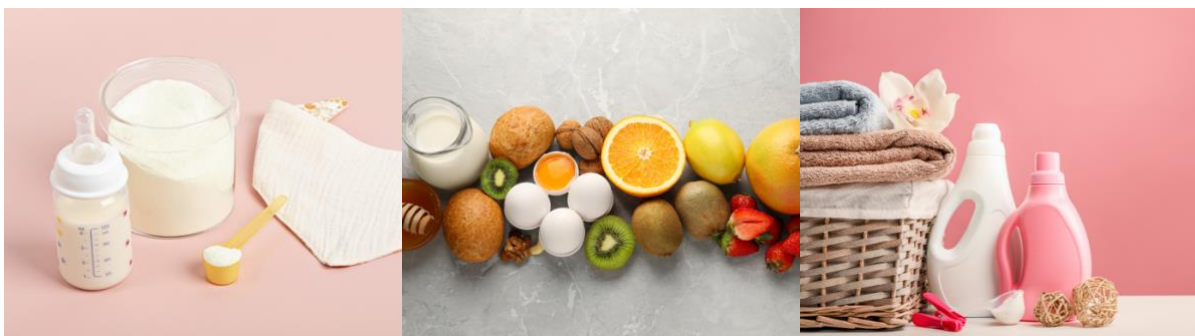
Atopic eczema, also known as atopic dermatitis, is a chronic skin disease that can be triggered by a variety of triggers. These triggers can be varied and individual to each child. The following is an overview of the most common triggers of atopic eczema in children:

### ALLERGENS

1. **Foods:** Certain foods can trigger or worsen eczema symptoms. The most common allergens include milk, eggs, soy, wheat, fish and nuts. For young children, allergens may include tomatoes, cucumber, chocolate, strawberries, citrus fruits, soy in infant formula and others.
2. **Inhalation:** Dust, pollen, moulds, animal hair and dust mites can also contribute to the aggravation of eczema.

### HARMFUL SUBSTANCES

1. **Chemicals:** Soaps, detergents, shampoos, perfumed products and cleaning products can irritate sensitive skin and aggravate eczema.
2. **Clothing:** Coarse or synthetic materials such as wool and polyester can cause irritation. Soft, cotton fabrics are recommended.





## ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

- **Climate and weather:** dry air, extreme temperatures (hot or cold), changes in humidity and excessive sweating can worsen eczema symptoms.
- **Air pollution:** High levels of air pollution can also be a contributing factor in worsening eczema.

## STRESS AND EMOTIONAL FACTORS

- **Stress:** Stress and emotional tension can trigger or worsen eczema symptoms. Children may be sensitive to family problems, environmental changes or school stress.

## INFECTION

- **Skin infections:** Bacterial, viral or fungal infections can worsen eczema. Staphylococcus aureus is a common bacterium found on the skin of people with atopic eczema and can cause infections.

## HORMONAL CHANGES

- **Hormonal fluctuations:** hormonal changes that occur during growth can also affect the condition of eczema. This is often seen in adolescents during puberty.

## GENETIC FACTORS

- **Family history:** Children whose parents have atopic eczema, asthma or hay fever are more likely to have atopic eczema.



## HOW TO PREVENT ECZEMA FROM GETTING WORSE?

1. **Identifying and avoiding triggers:** Keeping a diary of symptoms and exposure to different environments and foods can help identify specific triggers.
2. **Keep a diary** of what your child eats, if you are breastfeeding, also record what you eat yourself. By breastfeeding, allergens that you consume yourself enter your baby's system through the milk.



3. **Using moisturisers and emollients several times a day** helps to keep the skin supple and protected from irritants.
4. **Perfumed body lotions** can be one of the triggers for eczema.
5. **Using hypoallergenic products:** choosing products that are free of irritating chemicals and fragrances can help minimize irritation.
6. **Watch out for laundry detergents**, inappropriate fabric softeners, body washes and perfumes.
7. **Consult a doctor:** Regular consultations with a dermatologist can help find the most appropriate treatment and prevention for your child's particular case.

Proper identification and management of the triggers of atopic eczema can contribute significantly to better symptom control and improved quality of life for children with this condition.

## IS IT POSSIBLE FOR A CHILD WITH ATOPIC ECZEMA TO SWIM?

**Yes, a child with atopic eczema can swim, but it is important to take certain precautions to avoid worsening the skin condition.** Swimming can also have positive effects, such as increasing physical fitness and social skills. However, chlorinated water in swimming pools can sometimes worsen eczema symptoms, so swimming should be approached with some caution.

**In the first instance, it depends on your atopic child's current skin manifestations.** As soon as there are swollen deposits on the skin, or red blisters with a tendency to become wet, it is better to avoid the pool and contact with water in general. In the case of milder manifestations, it is possible to go swimming with your child without any problem, but **it is necessary to protect the skin of the swimmer with suitable products that will give the skin surface the necessary protective film.**

## SKIN CARE BEFORE AND AFTER SWIMMING

### BEFORE SWIMMING

1. **Hydrate the skin:** apply a thick layer of moisturizer or emollient to the child's skin before entering the pool. This will create a protective barrier between the skin and the chlorinated water.

"Impregnate" the swimmer's skin with recommended creams (not oils). Below are some of them:

- A-derma Dermalibour + Barrier protective cream
- Epaderm Cream
- Kvítok mango cream
- Bepanthen Sensiderm cream
- La Roche-Posay Lipikar Baume AP+
- Bioderma Atoderm Préventive



## AFTER SWIMMING

1. **Immediate shower:** After swimming, shower the child thoroughly with lukewarm water to remove chlorine and other chemical residues.
2. **Gently pat the baby's skin dry** with a towel, avoiding friction that could irritate the skin.
3. Rehydrate the skin: apply moisturiser or emollient as soon as possible after drying. This will help restore moisture and soothe the skin.

After swimming, shower the child and choose moisturizing creams:

- Bioderma Atoderm Intensive Baume
- La Roche Lipikar Baume AP
- Weleda (purple) – calming body milk
- Weleda Baby Derma White Mallow Body Lotion
- Eucerin AtopiControl cream
- A-Derma Exomega Control Emollient Cream



## Recommendations for skin care of a child with atopic eczema:

1. **Regular hydration:** moisturise your child's skin several times a day, not just before and after swimming.
2. **Limit bath time** to 5-10 minutes and use lukewarm water.
3. **Soaps and cleansers:** Avoid using soaps and cleansers with irritating chemicals and fragrances.
4. **Soft towels:** Use soft, gentle towels and dry the baby's skin by patting, not rubbing.

These products and practices will help relieve the symptoms of atopic eczema and improve your child's comfort before and after swimming.



zuzananemcova.cz

For answers to more questions from moms and dads about swimming with babies, see my [eBook 'How to swim safely with young children'](#). You can find it as a free download in the [EBOOKS section](#).

