

Wet dressings

Wet dressings are prescribed to shorten treatment time as well as to relieve itching and swelling and to gently cleanse the skin.

For use of any wet dressing, begin by thoroughly wetting strips of thick bath towel in the recommended solution. You can use muslin or flannel, but it will need to be applied in several layers to achieve the proper thickness.

Place the wet cloths over the area to be treated. If you are treating your hands or feet, wrap the strips between the fingers or toes. To be effective, the dressings must stay moist. You may want to use a dry towel, newspaper or bowl to control dripping. Do not wrap the cloths with plastic to try to control dripping as this seals it off from the air.

Do not use the wet dressing solution as a soak. Do not immerse the skin in the solution. Use it only for wet dressing treatment.

When the recommended treatment time is completed, dry the area carefully, then apply any other medication as instructed. Rinse the strips of cloth and allow them to dry. They can then be reused for the next treatment. Repeat as directed by your Family Dermatology doctor.

Burow's solution for dressings:

Use Domeboro tablets or powder, available from your pharmacist without a prescription. Dissolve one tablet or packet of powder in a pint of cool tap water. Any leftover solution can be stored for up to 24 hours for later use. It must be stored in a covered container away from sunlight.

Permanganate solution for dressings:

Crush two tablets in a pan or bowl using the back of a spoon. Do not do this with your fingers – this is a strong medication and it may burn the skin. Add one pint of cool water and stir to dissolve. Note that this solution will stain fabrics. It may also stain the pan or bowl. After treatment, the skin may be slightly brown, but this will fade after a few days. Unused solution can be stored for up to 24 hours.

Saline solution for dressings:

Dissolve one tablespoon of salt in a quart of lukewarm water.

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