

## Dish washing

Keep the temperature of the water low and use running water. You should use long handled brushes rather than cloths. Always wear gloves when in contact with detergents and washing up liquid.

## Machines

Use of washing machines and dishwashers will prevent further flaring of the skin and inflammation. If loose powder is used then this should be handled with a measuring cup. Pre-packed tablets or capsules will reduce the contact with the detergent. Remember that skin resistance is lowered for at least 4–5 months after the dermatitis has apparently healed.

You should continue with these skin care instructions during this time.

## Feedback

We are keen to hear your comments and ideas about improving the service. Please email the department with any comments.

If you have any concerns or feedback please email the Occupational Health Service via:

✉ [OHEnquiries@uhb.nhs.uk](mailto:OHEnquiries@uhb.nhs.uk).

## How to refer

To request any of the services offered by Occupational Health or to find out more, please contact your local hospital below;

### Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham (Heritage Building)

3rd Floor North Block (South Corridor),  
Mindelsohn Way, Birmingham, B15 2TH

**Tel:** 0121 371 7170

**Email:** [OHEnquiries@uhb.nhs.uk](mailto:OHEnquiries@uhb.nhs.uk)

### Heartlands Hospital

Stratford House, Bordesley Green Road,  
Birmingham, B9 5SS

**Tel:** 0121 424 3004

**Email:** [OHEnquiries@uhb.nhs.uk](mailto:OHEnquiries@uhb.nhs.uk)

### Good Hope Hospital

23 Bedford Road, Sutton Coldfield,  
West Midlands, B75 6BE

**Tel:** 0121 424 3004

**Email:** [OHEnquiries@uhb.nhs.uk](mailto:OHEnquiries@uhb.nhs.uk)

### Solihull Hospital

Lode Lane, Solihull, B91 2JL

**Tel:** 0121 424 3004

**Email:** [OHEnquiries@uhb.nhs.uk](mailto:OHEnquiries@uhb.nhs.uk)

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**University Hospitals Birmingham**  
NHS Foundation Trust



**Occupational  
Health Service**  
General care for  
your hands



**Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham  
(Heritage Building)**

**Email:** [OHEnquiries@uhb.nhs.uk](mailto:OHEnquiries@uhb.nhs.uk)

**Tel:** 0121 371 7170

**Heartlands Hospital  
Good Hope Hospital  
Solihull Hospital**

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**Tel:** 0121 424 3004

## Looking after your hands

Good skin care is important especially for healthcare workers. Your job may require frequent hand washing and wearing of gloves. As a result, your skin's natural barrier can be damaged and become inflamed. This leaflet is for those who suffer with eczema or dermatitis and provides advice to help the skin recover.

## Hand washing steps

You should use lukewarm water and a soap substitute for example; E45 wash, aqueous cream, emulsifying ointment or hydrous ointment. If your hands are dirty use an unscented soap without tar or sulphur. The soap should be used sparingly and the hands rinsed thoroughly. Use a clean towel to dry carefully, especially in the web spaces between your fingers. If soap is used then this should be followed with an unscented moisturiser.

## Moisturising

If your skin is dry use an unscented moisturiser as frequently as possible to restore a feeling of suppleness. As your skin improves the frequency of applying moisturiser can be reduced.

## Gloves

You should always choose your gloves according to the task in hand;  
**At work:** Where ever possible you should use nitrile gloves, in exceptional

circumstances latex gloves may be used.

**At home:** Cotton linings in domestic gloves will reduce friction further. If possible, gloves should not be worn for more than 20 minutes at a time. If water happens to enter a glove then it should be removed immediately. Gloves should be turned inside out and rinsed under warm water several times a week. Gloves used for home and domestic purposes should be replaced every 2–3 weeks for home use, and more frequently for industrial use. You should inspect your gloves regularly.

Further advice on gloves should be sought from the Occupational Health Department.

## Detergents

Avoid contact with detergents and other strong cleansing agents. Do not use your bare hands to touch packages which are contaminated on the outside.

## Shampoo

You should avoid direct contact with shampoo. Use plastic gloves when washing the hair of your children or animals.

## Polishes

You should avoid contact with any polishes or wax for example; metal, shoe, floor, furniture, window.

## Solvents

Solvents will degrease your skin so you should avoid contact with white spirits, petrol, paraffin, turpentine, thinners, paint strippers and trichlorethylene ("Trike").

## Citrus fruits

The juice of citrus fruit can cause irritation to some individuals' hands, these include oranges, satsumas, lemons, limes, and grapefruit.

## Cosmetics

Do not apply hair lotion, hair cream, perming lotion or hair dye with your bare hands. Hair removing creams will damage your skin; avoid using these creams or wear gloves if you do need to use these products.

## Cold temperatures

You should wear warm gloves in cold weather or cold conditions.

## Jewellery

Wearing rings on your fingers traps soap and other substances next to the skin. Do not wear rings at work or for doing housework until the skin has been clear for at least three months. Never wash your hands using soap whilst wearing a ring. Keep the insides of your rings clean by brushing them under running water.