

# Pediatric skin ailments common in winter

27 November 2013

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As parents across the Chicago area prepare to take that perfect holiday photo to send to family and friends, they may want to consider more than just getting their kids to smile and look at the camera.

Certain [skin](#) ailments can flare up in kids this time of year. Loyola University Health System pediatric dermatologists Wendy Schumacher-Kim, DO, and Lily Uihlein, MD, offer the following tips to curb these common conditions and leave your little ones picture perfect this holiday season.

**Cradle cap.** Cradle cap, or seborrheic dermatitis, is characterized by flaky, [dry skin](#) or crusty patches on a baby's scalp. Parents can massage the baby's scalp with mineral oil and gently loosen the flakes with a soft toothbrush.

**Keratosis pilaris.** This condition causes small, rough bumps on the arms, thighs, cheeks or buttocks, which can be inflamed (pink or red). Though the condition is usually asymptomatic, keratosis pilaris may appear in the winter when humidity is low and skin is dry. Treatments include emollients and gentle topical exfoliants to smooth rough skin and a mild topical steroid to reduce redness. Parents should talk with their child's doctor to determine the best treatment.

**Eczema.** This condition is characterized by dry, itchy, red skin. Infants and children with eczema should be bathed with a mild, fragrance-free cleanser in lukewarm water for no more than 10 minutes. Parents should apply a thick moisturizer to the skin following the bath. Temperature and humidity levels should be kept comfortable and parents should avoid situations where their child may sweat and overheat. A pediatric dermatologist can identify triggers that may exacerbate a child's eczema and recommend topical treatments to manage the condition.

**Acne.** Acne may be an issue that [parents](#) see in their older children. This is the most common chronic [skin disease](#), affecting more than 85

percent of people at some point in their lives. Acne in preteens and teens requires regular treatment for four-six weeks to see improvement. Skin should be washed gently once to twice daily. Squeezing, picking or scrubbing acne should be avoided, as it causes inflammation. Topical prescription medications to unclog pores (topical vitamin A derivatives) are the mainstay of treatment. Oral antibiotics also may be necessary.

Provided by Loyola University Health System

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