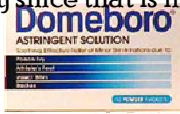


skin health

Many disturbances to the health of our skin are simply due to a stressful local environment. Babies are famous for 'diaper rash' due to repeated exposure to urine and feces. Adults can have challenges due to constant wetness with skinfolds that overlap or groins that always seem sweaty.

Recent research shows that skin does have natural antibacterial substances. So restoring the skin to its optimal health frequently will not require antibacterial or even antifungal medication.

With both a baby's bottom and an adult's constantly sweaty skin the first corrective measure is to keep the area dry. Naturally since that is impossible at times, at least dry the skin out nicely a few times a day. I like a drying agent called:



This is available over the counter without prescription.

An astringent is a product intended to constrict tissues by drying them up. There are three basic types of astringent action:

- 1) Decreasing blood supply by constricting small blood vessels.
- 2) Abstracting water away from the tissue.
- 3) Encouraging the coagulation of a crust.



This product is based on a formula discovered by Karl August Burrow in the mid 1800s. Burrow was working as an ophthalmologist and would prepare an aluminum acetate solution in water to treat oozing. The Bayer Company now produces this modified Burrow's solution of aluminum sulfate and calcium acetate. It also contains dextrin as an inactive ingredient.

Now personally I liked mixing some up in a clean bottle with a 'squirt cap.' Like a 'Joy' bottle. As long as the bottle starts out clean and you always squirt the solution out (no dipping) you should not have a problem with contaminating the contents. Now keep it at the changing table and use a little on a clean 'bounty' towel or if you are real fancy keep a ton of clean washcloths at the table (but only use them once before sending to the laundry again). By squirting a little on the cloth or towel and then plastering it on the diaper area you allow the astringent to do its job. Leave it there a few minutes and play with the baby. Most enjoy the sensation.

Sometimes if the rash is really bad, you can put Domeboros on some cotton balls and just keep that in the diaper. But limit that to once or twice at the beginning of treating a bad rash, as that could be over treating it.

Then pat dry (wiping can traumatize the bottom and set you back). Some even get a hair dryer and use a low- or no-heat option to dry the bottom. The first few weeks you may also be a purist and avoid baby powder but as time goes on you will see that a little powder soaks up any areas you may have missed and makes the area bone dry which really is beneficial. Don't blow powder in the baby's face and you should be fine.

Now how about all those medicines you see advertised? Why do I dislike them? Because first of all they are chemicals being used to treat what should be preventable or even treatable more naturally. Secondly steroids thin the skin over time and can decrease the skin's natural immune system. Thirdly, wiping on and cleaning off medication can cause a lot of trauma to delicate skin. It breaks my heart to see the thick "protective" ointments put on and off a bottom that is already hurting.

A quick mention about baby wipes. Some kids are fine with them and others have reactions to them. Just see which your child is. Steal a trick from elder care and make a mild soap solution in a spray bottle and spray it on, using 'Bounty' or a washcloth to clean up. Now when will they make an infant bidet? Created 10-02 by TSG