

Tips for Managing Itching



Things you can do on your own

- Apply anti-itching lotion (such as Calamine or Sarna) 2-3 times per day.
- Add baking soda or oatmeal to your bathwater.
- Use gentle soap. Avoid harsh chemicals, perfumes, and detergents.
- Avoid getting sweaty, and rinse off if you are sweaty.
- Keep your nails clean and short to avoid injury when scratching.
- Try applying cool, moist cloths instead of scratching.
- Eat a healthy diet and stay hydrated by drinking 6-8 glasses of water each day.
- Use an air humidifier to keep the air in your home moist.



With over-the-counter medications

Ask your care team if you can take over-the-counter (OTC) medications. OTC antihistamines, like Benadryl, can help.

- Benadryl often relieves itching and can be taken every 4-6 hours. It can make you sleepy.
- You can buy Benadryl at your local drugstore.
- Benadryl comes as a pill, liquid, spray, or gel.
- Apply moisturizing or anti-itch lotion to your skin.



With the help of your care team

Ask your care team about a prescription topical steroid to help with itching.



When to call your care team for help

- If your skin or eyes appear yellow in color
- If your pee is brown like tea
- If you have signs of an infection such as redness along your incision, drainage of pus, or a fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher
- If the itching may be due to a new medication



For more information and support, visit the American Cancer Society website at cancer.org/itching or call us at **1-800-227-2345**. We're here when you need us.