



THE ATOPY



CLOCK

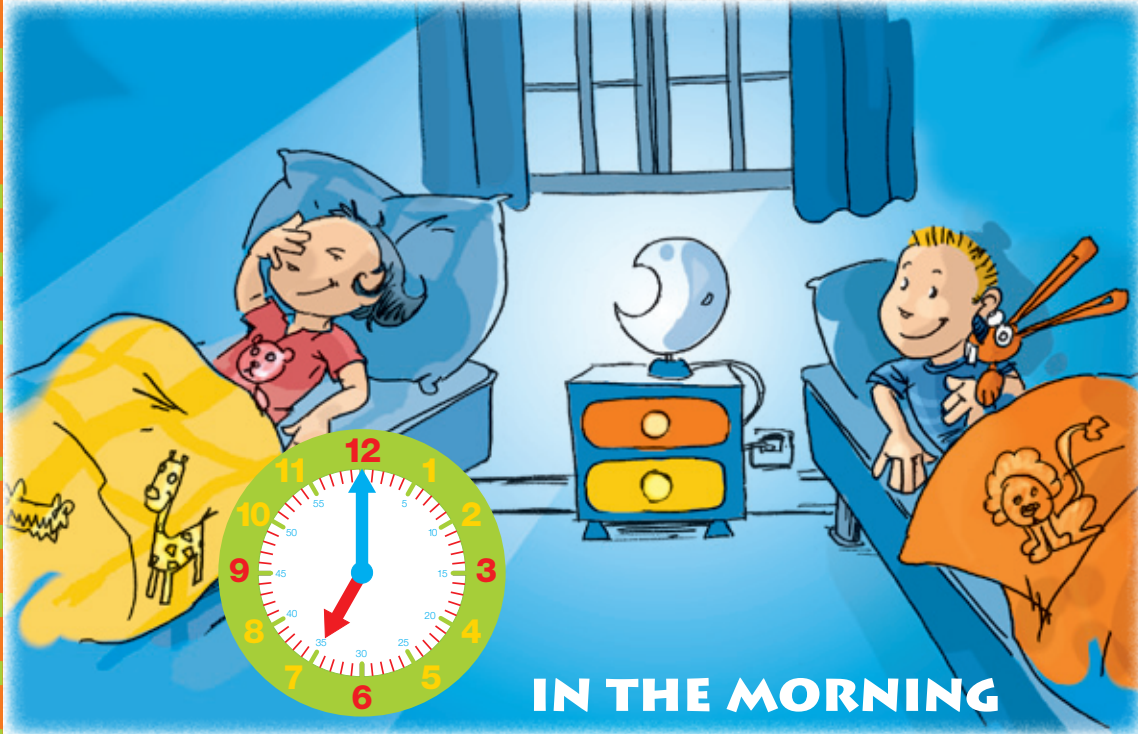


■ *Atopic eczema is a chronic disease that could make even the simplest tasks more complicated.*

The atopy clock has thus been designed to help atopic children better cope with their daily activities.

Developed by Professor Gelmetti and the Italian School of Atopy in Milan, this educational tool, aimed at practitioners, offers a list of “Do’s and Don’ts” for parents to learn what they should or should not do with regard to their child’s day-to-day activities.

This clock is also fun and parents can easily use it to facilitate communication with their child and therefore help them better cope with the disease. ■

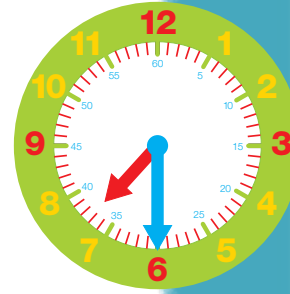


IN THE MORNING

■ Although mornings are always a rush, it's important to ask about your child's sleep. He may have spent most of his night scratching due to itchiness or discomfort.

Sleepless nights may also cause daytime drowsiness, fatigue, mood swings and affect concentration.

Tell your child that you understand how he feels, that you know it's difficult to stop the scratching and that you're there to help. ■



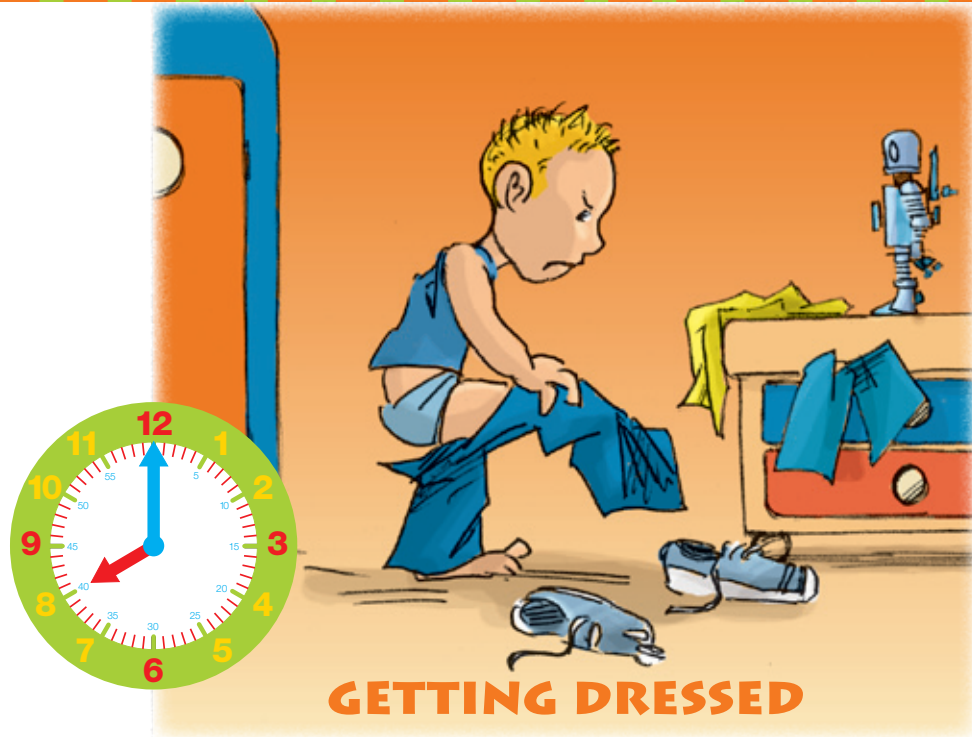
GETTING WASHED

■ Washing must be done daily. Make sure that the water's temperature is not too hot (between 35° and 36°C) as this can increase the skin's sensitivity level.

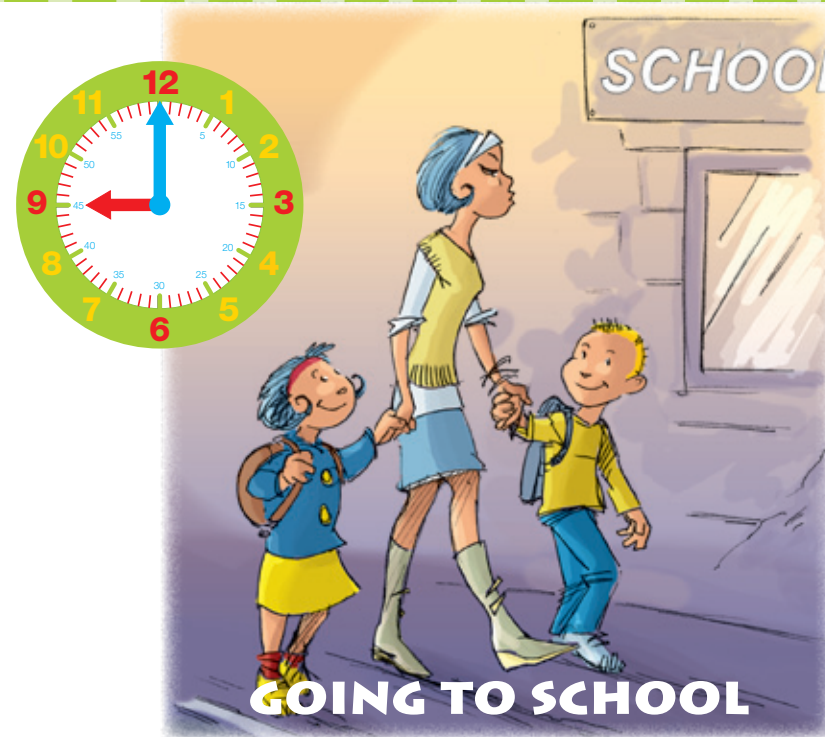
The key to washing atopic skin is therefore gentleness.

After the shower, delicately pat dry with a towel without rubbing.

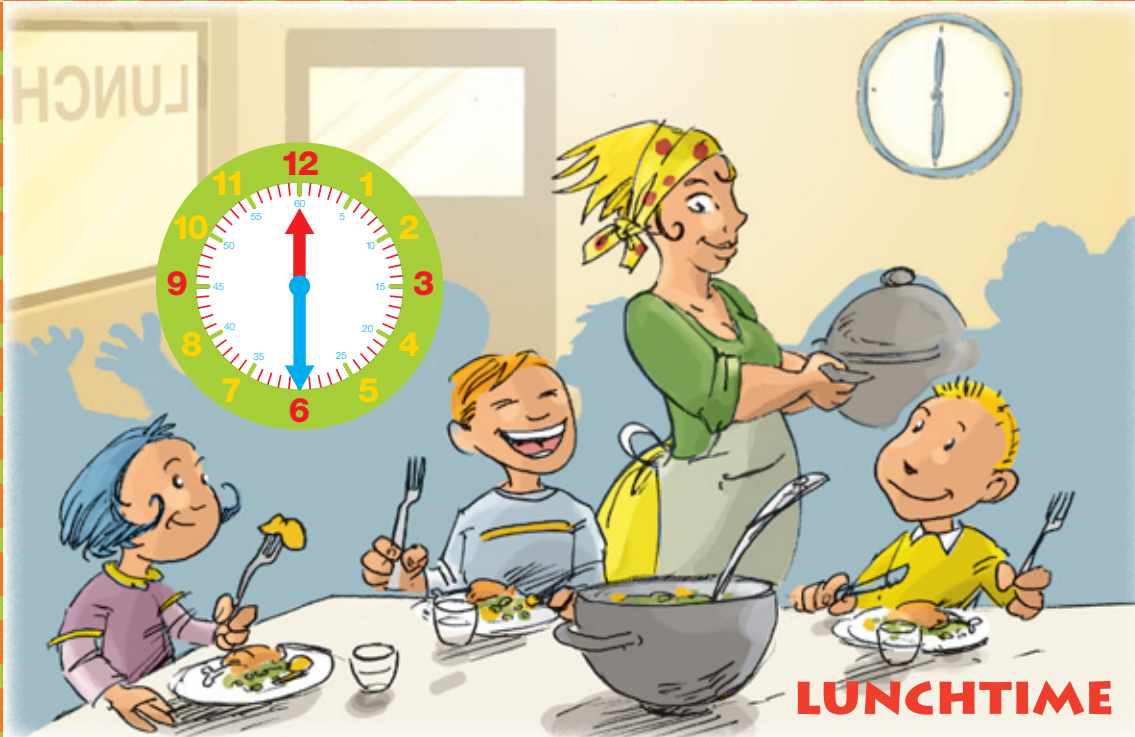
This is also the perfect time to apply the topical treatment recommended by the doctor (medicine and/or emollient). ■



- To avoid exposing irritated areas, opt for long-sleeve tops and pants. Sweating from wearing warm clothes may also trigger itching and scratching. Buy cotton instead of synthetic or wool fibres, which very often irritate the skin. Ideally, get your child to change underwear and pyjama every day. ■



- At the start of every school year, do not hesitate to explain your child's condition to his teacher. Inform that he might feel tired or irritable because of the itching that wakes him up at the night. Say that his need to scratch could also affect his ability to stay concentrated and still. Make sure that your child's desk is not near an air vent, air conditioning or source of heating (heater, sitting by a sunny window). Now is also the good time to tell your child that atopic dermatitis is **ABSOLUTELY NOT CONTAGIOUS** nor is it caused by poor hygiene; he will in turn be able to reassure the others and hence make the disease less alarming. Children with eczema may feel embarrassed by their skin's appearance and it's not unusual to hear that their school friends make fun of them because of the way they look. ■



■ If your child has his lunch at the cafeteria, inform the school staff of what foods to avoid as your child may also be allergic to eggs or dairy products.

Ripe seasonal fruits are generally recommended in this case.

Tell your child that he should not be ashamed of talking openly about his condition and do the same with other parents or teachers in contact with your child. ■



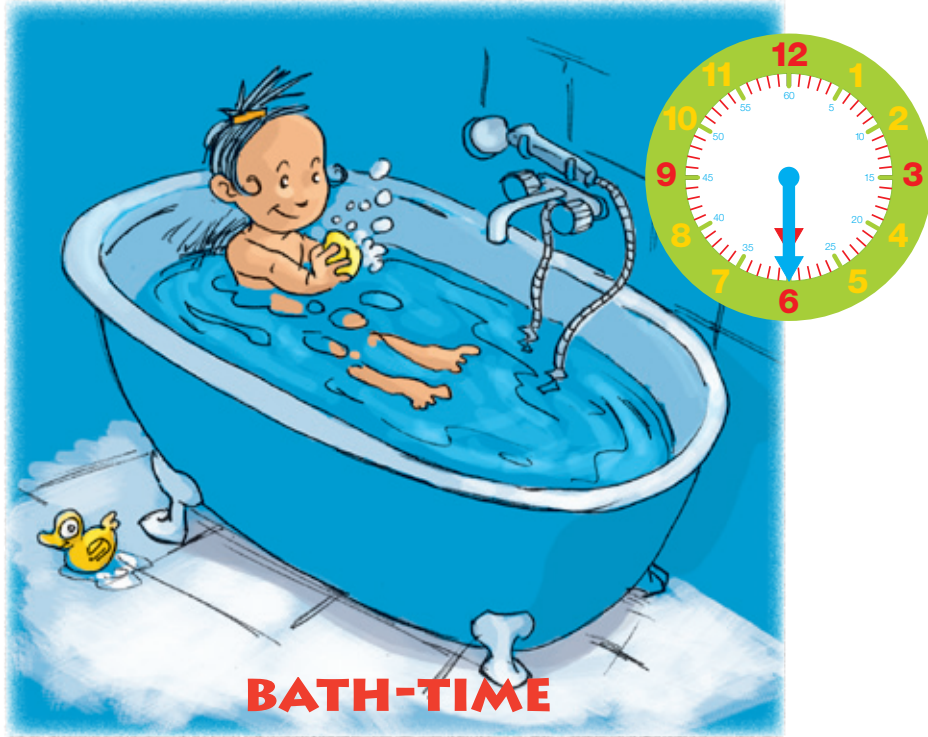
■ Springtime can be a real nightmare for allergy-sufferers namely in case of outdoor activities when pollen levels are at their highest.

In the summer, ensure that your child's skin is protected from UV-rays by applying adapted sun protection.

At night, avoid using insect repellents which can harm his fragile skin. After a sports activities, always make sure your child has clean and dry clothes he can change into as damp clothes will worsen the eczema.

School activities that require the handling of glue, paint, clay, certain foods, wooden or metal objects can cause flare-ups.

It is best to clearly explain to your child what he can or cannot touch. ■



■ Evening wash should be a fun yet relaxing time for your child. If your child prefers having a bath, make sure it does not last for too long and that the water is not too hot. Remember to keep his nails short to minimize any skin damage caused by scratching. To cleanse the skin without harming it, choose adapted products such as a bathing oil or an extra-gentle cleanser. Avoid the use of rough wash cloths.

This is also the perfect time to apply the topical treatment recommended by the doctor (medicine and/or emollient) and why not teach your child some techniques so that he can apply the cream by himself.

Keep the skin well moisturized even when it is not irritated. This will reduce the frequency of flare-ups. ■



■ We don't recommend any specific diet although some foods need to be avoided: raw tomatoes, sour fruits (citrus fruits, kiwis); peanuts, seafood; some types of fish specially if tinned (tuna, sardines; mackerel, herring, anchovies, salmon); pork, cooked pork meats, hard cheeses (parmesan, Swiss cheese), mustard and spices.

Children who are allergic to eggs or dairy foods should naturally avoid having them. ■



WATCHING TV AND FREE TIME

■ You've probably noticed that your child tends to scratch at specific times of the day or while watching television. If this is the case, try to break the itch-scratch cycle by choosing that tricky time to apply a moisturizing cream which will ease the itching.

Why not keep his hands busy by asking your child to draw a picture with some markers (use water removable markers as regular ones can cause irritation). Keep in mind that the use of scissors or even holding a pen can be painful if your child has eczema on the hands and that some material will worsen your child's condition (cardboard, modelling clay). ■



BEDTIME

■ Opt for cotton linen only and washable duvets and curtains.

Avoid dust collecting toys and keep the play area clean.

The bedroom should be kept clean, tidy and well-ventilated. Remove any kind of dust, animal hair and dust mites which are all potential allergens. Avoid floor carpets (or otherwise use an anti-acarid carpet cleaner on a regular basis). Avoid wool or horsehair mattresses; feather pillows or duvets.

Consider cotton gloves at night if your child tends to scratch in his sleep. And, above all, never smoke around children with atopy! ■

The Foundation for Atopic Dermatitis would like to express its warm thanks to Dr Carlo Gelmetti, for his active contribution to the design and writing of this document.



FONDATION POUR LA DERMATITE ATOPIQUE
RECHERCHE ET ÉDUCATION

*Head office : Hôtel-Dieu Saint Jacques - 2, rue Viguerie - 31000 TOULOUSE
Tel. : 33 (5) 63 58 98 10*

*Email : fondationdermatiteatopique@pierre-fabre.com
www.fondation-dermatite-atopique.org*