



#### HOW-TO GUIDE · GROOMING

# Build one safe shelf for partner, teen, baby and bump

This guide is for households sharing products across partner, teen, baby and pregnancy. After reading it you will be able to set up storage, bathe eczema prone skin, simplify teen routines and screen labels with questions ready for a clinician.



#### **Gentle bathing**

Short lukewarm baths plus fast moisturizing keep baby skin calmer.



#### **Simple teens**

Fingertips, lukewarm water and SPF beat scrubbing every time.



#### **Pause retinoids**

Topical retinoids wait until after delivery, so check every label.

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Two sinks, one shower and four sets of needs can make a bathroom shelf feel crowded. Once each person has a short order of steps and risky bottles live out of reach, mornings run smoother and skin stays calmer.

01

Set up one safe shelf and a safer bathroom

Start by sorting everything into two places. Keep one low shelf for daily basics that anyone can grab, such as gentle wash, plain moisturizer and sunscreen. Move actives, medicines, razors, scissors and breakable glass to high storage or a locked cabinet. All toiletries including sprays, makeup and body products should be stored high out of reach or in locked cabinets.

Water safety comes next because small hands explore fast. Home water heaters should be set to 120 degrees Fahrenheit maximum to prevent scalding. Add non slip mats in the tub, outlet covers near sinks, door knob covers where needed and toilet seat locks. Toilet seat locks and constant supervision during bath time are recommended to prevent drowning risk. Never leave a baby alone in the bath or bathroom, not for a towel or a phone.

Electrical tools need their own rule. Unplug blow dryers, curling irons and flat irons after use and store them dry away from children. Keep cords away from sinks and tubs and let barrels cool before putting them away. A small tray on a high shelf works well for a dryer and an iron, with the plug wrapped loose rather than tight around the handle.

Look at the whole bathroom once a week with fresh eyes. Wipe sticky pumps so labels stay readable. Toss expired sunscreen and anything without a readable ingredient list. Write the name of the owner on shared bottles with a marker, such as teen wash or adult only, so a toddler wash never gets confused with an acid cleanser.

A five minute reset that keeps the shelf working

- 1. Return daily basics to the low shelf and actives to the locked spot.
- 2. Unplug tools, dry the counter and close the toilet lid and lock.
- 3. Check that razors, trimmers and glass bottles sit high and closed.
- 4. Note anything running low so a substitute does not sneak in.

#### FROM THE EDITORS

Fragrance free and unscented are not the same. Products labeled fragrance free are recommended in pregnancy to avoid phthalates, while unscented can still contain masking scents. When in doubt, read the full ingredient list and choose the shorter, plainer formula.

## 02

### Bathe a baby with eczema without flaring skin

As many as 25% of children are affected by eczema, so short calm baths matter in many homes. Baby baths for eczema should last only 5 to 10 minutes to keep skin supple. Baby eczema baths should use two inches of lukewarm water and avoid bubble bath products. Lukewarm feels comfortably warm on the inside of the wrist, never hot.

Keep the wash simple. Use a soft cloth with no scrubbing and a mild fragrance free wash for dirty spots only, such as hands, feet, folds and diaper area. Rinse the rest with water alone. For the face between baths, spot clean with a damp lukewarm cloth or a fragrance free hypoallergenic wipe and pat dry.

What happens in the three minutes after the bath matters most. Baby skin should be patted dry without harsh rubbing and moisturized within three minutes after bathing while still slightly damp. Patting leaves a thin film of water that helps the cream spread and seal. Dress the baby in soft cotton or bamboo and skip wool or scratchy seams against sore patches.

Colloidal oatmeal baths come up often in pediatric dermatology handouts. The Food and Drug Administration categorized colloidal oatmeal as a skin protectant in 2003. It supports comfort during bathing for some families, though it does not replace a moisturizer or a care plan from a pediatrician. Ask the pediatrician what type of moisturizer to use after the bath and when a prescription might be needed, since evidence does not name one best strength for every infant.

#### The bath time order

1. Gather towel, clean diaper, clothes and moisturizer before water runs.
2. Fill to two inches with lukewarm water and test with wrist or elbow.
3. Wash dirty spots with a small amount of mild wash, then rinse well.
4. Lift out after 5 to 10 minutes, pat dry and moisturize within three minutes.

## Build a simple teen routine for acne prone skin

Teens do better with fewer steps done daily than with a crowded shelf. A basic teen acne routine focuses on cleanser, acne treatment gel, moisturizer and daytime sunscreen. Start one product at a time so it is clear what helps and what stings.

Technique matters more than pressure. Teens should cleanse gently with fingertips and lukewarm not hot water because vigorous scrubbing can irritate and worsen acne. Use lukewarm water morning and night or once daily if skin runs dry, then rinse fully and pat dry. Follow with a lightweight oil free non comedogenic moisturizer while skin still feels slightly damp.

Daytime teen routine should end with broad spectrum sunscreen SPF 30 or higher with reapplication as directed. Add a hat and shade at midday when possible. At night, keep hair products off the forehead where pomades can clog pores, change pillowcases often and keep phones and hands off the face.

For clogged pores, brand and clinic sources often point to specific strengths. CeraVe Acne Control Cleanser contains 2% salicylic acid and is described for whiteheads, blackheads and pores. A teen with mostly blackheads and whiteheads might use a 2 percent salicylic acid wash a few times per week, not twice daily at first. CeraVe Acne Foaming Cream Cleanser contains 4% benzoyl peroxide and a wash with 10% benzoyl peroxide is described as maximum strength without prescription. A teen with red pustules might try a benzoyl peroxide wash on alternate days, then build slowly if tolerated.

Sleep supports the routine too. Teens are advised to get 7 to 9 hours of quality sleep per night to support skin recovery. A regular bedtime, a charged phone outside the bedroom and a simple pillowcase change each week cost little and help consistency.

See a dermatologist for nodules, cysts, scars, sudden painful bumps or acne that does not improve after eight to twelve weeks of steady care. Bring the product names, strengths and schedule so the visit can focus on what to keep and what to change.

### FROM THE EDITORS

Stick with gentle, non comedogenic wash and moisturizer basics and bring actives in slowly instead of locking into one brand. No single wash suits every teen, so patch test, go slow and ask a dermatologist about the right active and schedule.

## 04

### Share beard and hair tools without sharing germs or actives

Shared clippers, razors, combs and makeup brushes pick up skin, oil and product fast. Keep beard trimmers, razors, scissors, shampoos, sprays and makeup out of reach in locked cabinets or high storage. Store sharp objects and breakable glass secured and dry, with blade guards on.

Cleaning takes less time than treating an infected nick. Rinse combs and brushes to remove hair and paste, then wash with warm soapy water and air dry fully. Wipe clipper blades and trimmer heads as directed, oil if the manual calls for it and store dry. Replace razor blades on schedule and shave with the grain using a clean blade and plenty of slip from wash or shave cream. Rinse well and pat dry rather than rubbing sore skin.

Keep medicines and strong actives separate. Do not share prescription creams and keep adult acne acids and retinoids separate from teen and baby products. A labeled bin or zip pouch marked adult only helps a tired teen avoid the wrong tube. The same rule holds for sprays and makeup, since little fingers reach fast and eyes and mouths absorb more.

Watch outlets and water together. Keep outlets away from sinks and tubs, dry hands before plugging in and unplug after styling. If a tool falls into water, do not reach in while it is plugged in. Step back, unplug with dry hands and let it dry fully before use.

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## 05

### Read labels and pause risky pregnancy ingredients

Pregnancy changes how to read a front label. "With the exception of the known correlation between vitamin A derivatives like retinoids, most topical skin care is low risk," said Layan Alrahmani, M.D., board-certified ob-gyn and maternal-fetal medicine specialist. That sentence steadies many readers, yet it still leaves room to pause specific ingredients and ask an obstetric provider about dose, area and frequency.

Retinoids sit at the top of the pause list. Oral retinoids such as isotretinoin are known to cause birth defects and topical retinoids are advised to be avoided until larger cohorts are studied. Pause topical retinoids including tretinoin, adapalene and tazarotene during pregnancy and while trying to conceive. "It is absolutely contraindicated in pregnant women and women desiring to become pregnant." said InfantRisk overview on isotretinoin capsules for acne. Evidence on topical retinoid birth defects is described as controversial, with case reports raising concern and small prospective studies finding no increased major malformations, which is why most guidance favors caution.

Other lightening and peeling ingredients need limits too. Hydroquinone has estimated systemic absorption of 35% to 45.3% after topical use, so many clinicians advise avoiding it until after delivery. Salicylic acid peels are not recommended during pregnancy and AHA peels are described as usable safely in pregnancy, though many offices still wait until after delivery for any in office peel. Topical salicylic acid was undetectable from up to 25% on normal skin, with higher levels possible on damaged skin. A facial wash with no more than 2% salicylic acid is described as considered safe in pregnancy when used in small amounts once or twice daily. Low dose topical salicylic acid and glycolic acid in pregnancy are still uncertain, so use small amounts with caution or pause them until more human data exist.

Benzoyl peroxide reads as lower concern in reviews. Only 5% of benzoyl peroxide is absorbed through skin and it is metabolized to benzoic acid and excreted in urine. Even so, use the smallest amount that works, rinse washes well and ask the obstetric provider before starting a new leave on product.

Read the full INCI list rather than trusting the front. Prefer fragrance free over unscented, prefer short simple formulas and do not trust front label pregnancy safe claims alone. Natural or hypoallergenic labels do not guarantee safety, since natural extracts can irritate and pregnancy safe marketing can still hide irritants. Evidence on essential oils at real world doses in pregnancy remains limited, so treat strong scents as a reason to choose plainer products and ventilate the bathroom.

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## 06

### The checklist

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- ☐ Set heater to 120 degrees Fahrenheit maximum and test bath water lukewarm
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- ☐ Move medicines, acids, retinoids, razors and tools to high locked storage
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- ☐ Keep daily basics low and labeled by user
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- ☐ Bathe baby 5 to 10 minutes in two inches of water with no bubble bath
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- ☐ Pat baby dry and moisturize within three minutes on damp skin
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- ☐ Teach teen fingertip cleansing with lukewarm water and no scrubbing
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- ☐ Use broad spectrum SPF 30 or higher daily with reapplication as directed
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- ☐ Clean combs, brushes and trimmer heads and store tools dry and unplugged
- 
- ☐ Pause topical retinoids and oral isotretinoin and ask obstetric provider first
- 
- ☐ Read full ingredient lists and choose fragrance free simple formulas
- 
- ☐ Write product names, strengths and schedules for doctor visits
- 
- ☐ Never leave baby alone in bath and keep toilet locks and mats in place
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## 07

### Sources and further reading

- How to Wash & Bathe Your Baby With Eczema Aveeno® · [aveeno.com](https://www.aveeno.com)
- A Daily Skincare Routine for Teens With Acne-Prone Skin · [cerave.com](https://www.cerave.com)
- Safety of skin care products during pregnancy · [pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov)
- Put down the retinol! What skin care is safe (and what's not) during pregnancy · [babycenter.com](https://www.babycenter.com)
- This Is How to Childproof a Bathroom - Mommybites · [mommybites.com](https://www.mommybites.com)
- Your Guide to Pregnancy-Safe Skincare · [happiestbaby.com](https://www.happiestbaby.com)
- Childproofing the Bathroom: Essential Steps to Ensure Pediatric Safety · [hellopediatrics.com](https://www.hellopediatrics.com)
- An Overview of the Safety of Skin Care Products During Pregnancy · [infantrisk.com](https://www.infantrisk.com)

For information only, not medical advice. Hair loss, a scalp that will not settle, eczema flares and anything on a baby's skin belong with a dermatologist or a pediatrician.



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