

## Could your baby's bath lotion lead to a lifetime of eczema?

A new study by Professor Michael Cork, and his colleagues at Sheffield University, has identified a direct link between the growing number of newborn babies who develop eczema within the first 6 weeks of their lives and the use of soaps, modern bath oils and even medically prescribed lotions such as aqueous cream and olive oil.

Currently around 1 in 4 newborn babies develop eczema compared to only 1 in 25 in the 1940's and Prof Cork attributes this to the damaging effects of these agents on the skin in newborn babies.

Babies are unable to control the loss of water from their skin cells until they are about one year old. In normal skin the outer layer, called the stratum corneum, provides a barrier that keeps the skin hydrated and prevents the penetration of irritants and allergens. But in some babies, exposure to soaps, detergents and even some lotions breaks down this skin barrier. Water then evaporates from the skin cells causing the skin to shrink and crack and makes it vulnerable to penetration from irritants and allergens, which can then lead to an eczema flare.



But it is not just chemicals in bath time products and moisturising creams that can damage the skin of newborn babies. The wrong choice of clothing fabric worn next to baby's delicate skin could also irritate the skin.

For decades, cotton clothing was the fabric of choice to be worn next to inflamed skin. But now there is an even more effective product on the market.

For several years Dermatology departments throughout the UK have been using DermaSilk Therapeutic Clothing to help control the humidity and



temperature of the skin in babies and children with established eczema. The hi-tech fabric has proven to be highly effective in controlling inflamed skin and preventing eczema flares.

Dr Rupert Mason, medical advisor to Espere Healthcare Ltd, the UK distributors of DermaSilk, explained why the medical profession are re-evaluating the efficacy of cotton fabric to control eczema. "Because cotton is made up of short vegetable fibres it has the potential to irritate sensitive skin. Crucially cotton

fabrics cannot absorb excess moisture, which means that the inflamed skin remains damp, and could induce hypothermia in children who perspire excessively. DermaSilk garments are made from hypoallergenic medical grade silk which is able to control the humidity by soaking up any excess moisture, without feeling damp, so sensitive skin is kept cool and dry. DermaSilk acts as a second skin and its patented, bonded antimicrobial agent protects against bacterial contamination without adding chemicals to the skin. This technology could be used to help protect the skin of all newborns."

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**Editors notes**

Hi res images available on request

DermaSilk garments can be purchased on line from [www.dermasilk.co.uk](http://www.dermasilk.co.uk)

DermaSilk Baby's Body suits £41.95 incl VAT +P&P

DermaSilk Baby Leggings £31.95 incl VAT + P&P

### **More about Espère Healthcare**

DermaSilk Therapeutic Clothing is manufactured from specially knitted medical grade fibroin. This is derived from silk which has been stripped of its outer coating to make it hypoallergenic, and is used widely for medical sutures. This fabric is specially bonded with AEM 5772/5, a patented antimicrobial shield which has been used in hospitals for over 30 years and has proven ability to inhibit bacterial and fungal growth on fabrics such as operating theatre gowns. It acts by electrostatically attracting and physically puncturing bacteria and fungi. There is no chemical released from the silk to poison the cells and no chemicals or nano-particles are released onto the skin.

DermaSilk Therapeutic Clothing has been approved as a Class 1 medical device for use by the medical profession on NHS prescription since 2007. DermaSilk garments are used in the treatment and management of eczema by consultant dermatologists, GPs and nurses. Further indications have been added to the DermaSilk prescription portfolio to cover other conditions such as gravitational eczema in the elderly and epidermolysis bullosa, a severe and debilitating skin condition. Further research for the therapeutic use of DermaSilk in other conditions has shown very promising results.

The company also supply DermaTherapy Bedding, developed from a patented specially designed synthetic fabric sourced from the USA. Proven useful for treating eczema, this bedding has additional applications in pressure sore management in the elderly and infirm, acne, night sweats and night terrors in children. The fabric has an antimicrobial finish bonded to it to help counter bacteria such as MRSA and Clostridium difficile.

DermaSilkIntimo is the newest product in the range. The inclusion of 4% elastane compliments the inherent stretch properties of the silk and has led to a new range of seamless designs. The latest clinical trials have shown the efficacy of these garments in relieving symptoms in women suffering from lichen sclerosus and candida infections.

Espère are also driving the development of these fabrics into new areas, and trials are in progress for the use of DermaSilk in lymphoedema, trench foot and end of life care. Other fabric technologies are also currently being investigated.

Espère Healthcare Ltd is the Distributor of DermaTherapy Bedding in the UK and Ireland.

DermaTherapy® is a registered trademark of Precision Fabrics Group Inc.

For more information about DermaSilk's range of therapeutic clothing, visit [www.DermaSilk.co.uk](http://www.DermaSilk.co.uk).

For more information about DermaSilk Intimo's range of biofunctional clothing, visit [www.DermaSilkintimo.co.uk](http://www.DermaSilkintimo.co.uk).

For more information about DermaTherapy's line of Healthy Bedding products, visit [www.dermatherapybedding.co.uk](http://www.dermatherapybedding.co.uk)

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