



Post-swim cures doctors swear by

All that time splashing around can lead to unexpected health problems. Here's how fellow parents—who happen to be doctors—tackle their own children's water woes

For chlorine itch

Sunflower seed oil

"My daughter is like a little fish, swimming in the neighborhood pool every day during the summer. But the daily chlorine exposure depletes the natural oils in her skin, drying it out and making it itchy," says mother-of-one Whitney Bowe, M.D., a dermatologist in New York City. So she began rinsing the chlorine off her daughter in lukewarm water post-swim, skipping the soap, which would further strip the skin of natural oils. "After a quick pat dry with a cotton towel, I rubbed a few teaspoons of sunflower seed oil in my hands, then used my palms to coat my daughter's arms and legs," explains Dr. Bowe. "Then I'd need an extra teaspoon or two to coat her trunk. Her skin recovered within a few days." If you don't have any sunflower seed oil on hand, Dr. Bowe notes that coconut oil works well too.



For swimmer's ear

Warm drops

When her daughter developed swimmer's ear on vacation, mother-of-two Nina Shapiro, M.D., director of pediatric ear, nose and throat at Mattel Children's Hospital UCLA, whipped up a 2:1 mix of rubbing alcohol (to dry the ear) and white vinegar (to kill off any germs that had invaded). "I put it in a dropper and placed it in my pocket for 15 minutes to warm it," she says. "It's important that the drops are body temperature, not room temperature. Anything colder than 98°F is annoying to the ear canal." Then Dr. Shapiro put 3 to 4 drops in her daughter's ear. "I had her lie on her side for 5 minutes so it wouldn't drip. She felt better in the morning."

For athlete's foot

Probiotics *this way*

"My sons have brought home their fair share of athlete's foot, thanks to having unprotected feet at the pool," says Rallie McAllister, M.D., a mother of three and coauthor of *The Mommy MD Guide to Losing Weight and Feeling Great*. "Her Rx: probiotics. "They help repopulate the skin with beneficial bacteria that can crowd out the yeast responsible for athlete's foot." When her kids have an outbreak, Dr. McAllister has them open a probiotic capsule and sprinkle the contents into clean socks before putting them on. "The rash and itching get significantly better within 24 hours," she says. "This works faster than over-the-counter antifungals, plus it's cheaper." ❄

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