

Water demystified

Should I bathe my baby with water only?



Water alone...

has been identified as an ineffective cleanser as it does not remove fat-soluble substances such as faeces & sebum (oils, fatty acids)¹.

Water alone...

is likely to require more rubbing to clean, thereby causing skin irritation^{2,3}

Is all water equal?

No! Water can be "hard" or "soft" depending on the pH of the water. Water hardness affects how skin reacts to cleansing products^{2,4}.

Cleansers

Liquid cleansers that contain an emollient will provide further protective effects for the skin that water alone cannot¹.

Soaps are surfactants - synthetic substances that decrease surface tension of water helping to remove dirt from skin³. Soap based cleansers are more likely to dry and irritate skin².

Preservative free is best?

No! Liquid cleansers should contain adequate & appropriate preservatives⁴.

For more
information visit
ACNN's
Neo Skin SIG

Current recommendations for cleansers^{1,4}

- liquid, pH-neutral or mildly acidic cleansers over traditional alkaline soaps on neonates & infants
- an 'ideal' cleanser is one that does not cause irritation, alterations to the skin surface pH, or eye stinging
- contains nonionic and amphoteric surfactants (breaks water surface tension and emulsifies oil and dirt)
- soap-free (sodium laurel sulphate free)
- hypoallergenic with a low level of fragrance
- alcohol, paraben and phthalates free

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For more information contact the Neonatal Skin Special Interest Group at neoskinsig@acnn.org.au.

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1. Van Onselen J. Skin care for infants an evidence-based review. J of Family Health Care. 2013; 23 (3) 29-32. 32. 2. Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses. Neonatal Skin Care Evidence Based Clinical Practice Guideline; 3 ed. WashingtonC., U.S.A., 2013. 3. Kuller JM. Infant Skin Care Products: What Are the Issues? Advances in Neonatal Care. 2016;16:S3-S12. 4. Blume-Peytavi U, Lavender T, Jenerowicz D, et al. Recommendations from a European round table meeting on Best Practice Healthy Infant Skin Care. Pediatric dermatology. 2016. Produced by the Queensland Neonatal Nurses Skin Forum.

