



THE AUSTRALASIAN COLLEGE  
OF DERMATOLOGISTS

# GET HEALTHY HANDS *ASAP* DURING COVID-19

## A **avoid** irritants

**What are they?** Water, soap, sweating, excessive heat, dirt, chemicals.

To avoid irritants, use alcohol based hand sanitisers (ABHS) - see image. ABHS are better for the skin than frequent hand washing in water. **Use ABHS if hands are visibly clean; applying directly to skin.** ABHS with few ingredients as possible are best. When wearing gloves, change them as soon as they become wet inside from water or sweat.



## S **use a soap** free wash

**When do I wash?** If hands are visibly dirty.

Avoiding soap means always using a soap-free wash when washing your hands or showering. Soap-free washes contain syndets which are synthetic detergents and act like soap to physically remove the virus. Hand washing and ABHS are equally effective against the COVID-19 virus.



## A **apply** moisturisers

**What do I do after washing?**  
Dry them well & moisturise immediately.

Moisturising is the most important step to prevent dermatitis. Thick creams and ointments (like Vaseline) are more effective than runny lotions from a pump pack. Choose a fragrance-free product with as few ingredients as possible to avoid allergens.



## P **prescription** treatments

**When should I get help?**  
Seek help early; treat early

Complications occur frequently and include severe secondary infections, allergic contact dermatitis and recurrent flares.

Fast tracked telehealth consults in public hospital settings (bulk-billed) or private are available for both advice and prescriptions.



**Contributors:** Dr Lena Ly, Dr Celestine Wong, Dr Jennifer Cahill, Mr Austin Vo, Amanda Palmer, Dr Pooja Sharma, Dr Hope Dinh, Dr Bruce Tate, Dr Michelle Rodrigues and A/Prof Rosemary Nixon.

**March 2020 COVID-19 Taskforce: Healthy Hands for Health Care Workers**