




COCONUT OIL

Read in conjunction with [Disclaimer](#)

Formulary: Unrestricted	
Presentation	Sachet: 4 mL
Drug Class	Purified coconut extract: high in saturated fat particularly medium chain triglycerides
Indication	Coconut oil has a moisturising effect when applied to the skin. Used to maintain and improve skin integrity in preterm infants less than 30 weeks gestation. Continue until 37 weeks corrected gestational age, or discharge/transfer from the unit.
Side Effects	Nil
Storage & Stability	Store at room temperature

TOPICAL	Presentation	Sachet: 4 mL	
	Dosage	<p><u>Skin Integrity</u> ≤ 25 weeks gestation 1 sachet FOUR times a day for the first week of life, then decrease as described below.</p> <p>>25 weeks gestation Infants in an incubator: 1 sachet TWICE a day. Infants out of an incubator: 1 sachet ONCE daily.</p> <p>Applications should coincide with routine care. Start within 24 hours of birth and continue until 37 weeks corrected gestational age OR transfer to other hospital OR discharge home. An additional sachet may be used for larger infants or for very dry skin.</p>	

Administration

Prior to Application

- Perform Hand Hygiene as per protocol.
- Coconut oil can be applied without gloves (provided infant and nurse’s/carer’s skin is intact).
- Anti-staphing is not a contraindication to applying coconut oil. It may be applied before or after an anti-staphing procedure.

Application

- The parents should apply the coconut oil to their infant’s skin if they wish, under supervision of the bedside nurse.
- Apply topical coconut oil during routine cares to the entire skin (front and back). Do not apply coconut oil to the face, scalp, and sites of vascular access or other devices (e.g. chest drain).
- Use only a few gentle strokes to apply coconut oil. Do not massage. Application should only take 1-2 minutes.

Discard any unused oil in a sachet after opening.

Related Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines

Clinical Practice Guidelines:



[Neonatology – Skin care of extremely preterm infants ≤ 25 weeks gestation clinical pathway](#)

[Neonatology – Skin Care Guideline](#)

References

Strunk T, Pupala S, Hibbert J, Doherty D, Patole S, Topical Coconut Oil in Very Preterm Infants: An Open-Label Randomised Controlled Trial. Neonatology 2018;113:146-151

Document history

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