

PRURITUS PROTOCOL

Itching, or pruritus, in patients with liver disease can be extremely uncomfortable. It occurs when bile salts that are not being normally excreted, accumulate in the skin. The bile salts irritate the skin cells resulting in pruritus. The following measures have been found successful in decreasing pruritus either by stabilizing the skin cells or by assisting in the excretion of bile:

- 1) Decrease water temperature of shower or bath. Apply cold water after a warm or hot bath.
- 2) Use a moisturizing soap such as Dove and avoid deodorant soaps.
- 3) Do not dry off completely after shower/bath.
- 4) After shower/bath, while skin is still damp, apply EUCERIN CREAM to all skin that is itching. EUCERIN CREAM can be bought almost anywhere (Walgreens, Wal-Mart, K-Mart, etc.)
- 5) Wear fewer/lighter clothes.
- 6) Emollients with 1-2% menthol and moisturizers with oatmeal extract may also be helpful.
- 7) Trim fingernails.
- 8) Sleep with fewer clothes and blankets.
- 9) Cholestyramine powder (Questran, Cholestipo)