

Shabbat: Squeezing, Dabbing, and Smearing Medicinal Creams

You may squeeze a tube of cream on Shabbat, but you might not be able to use the cream on Shabbat for other reasons—consult a rabbi.

- NOTE

Smearing creams or ointments is permitted only in life-threatening situations. Otherwise, you may not smear cream on skin on Shabbat (or a Jewish festival) even using a shinu'i such as using the back of your hand or a toe. Dabbing is permitted, but only when you are permitted to use medicine for that purpose.
- EXAMPLE

You may dab cream on Shabbat for a bee sting.
- REASON

The pain from the sting will affect the entire body.
- EXAMPLE

You may not use cream for a mosquito bite.
- REASON

It is only a local irritation.
- NOTE

You may not smear cream for either condition.