

Newborn Rashes

Your newborn's skin goes through many changes during the first few weeks of life. Some of these changes may show up as areas of red, raised, or irritated skin (*rash*).

Many parents worry when their baby develops a rash, but many newborn rashes are completely normal and go away without treatment. Contact your health care provider if you have any concerns.

WHAT ARE SOME COMMON TYPES OF NEWBORN RASHES?

Milia

- Many newborns get this kind of rash. It appears as tiny, hard, yellow or white lumps.
- Milia can appear on the:
 - Face.
 - Chest.
 - Back.
 - Penis.
 - Mucous membranes, such as in the nose or mouth.

Heat rash

- This is also commonly called prickly rash or sweaty rash.
- This blotchy red rash looks like small bumps and spots.
- It often shows up on parts of the body covered by clothing or diapers.

Erythema toxicum (E tox)

- E tox looks like small, yellow-colored blisters surrounded by redness on your baby's skin. The spots of the rash can be blotchy.
- This is the most common kind of rash and usually starts two or three days after birth.
- This rash can appear on the:
 - Face.
 - Chest.
 - Back.
 - Arms.
 - Legs.

Neonatal acne

- This is a type of acne that often appears on a newborn's face, especially on the:
 - Forehead.
 - Nose.
 - Cheeks.

Pustular melanosis

- This is a less common newborn rash.

- It is more common in African American newborns.
- The blisters (*pustules*) in this rash are not surrounded by a blotchy red area.
- This rash can appear on any part of the body, even on the palms of the hands or soles of the feet.

WHAT CAUSES NEWBORN RASHES?

Causes of newborn rashes may include:

- Natural changes in the skin after birth.
- Hormonal changes in the mother or baby after birth.
- Infections from the germs that cause herpes, strep throat, and yeast infections.
- Overheating.
- Underlying health problems.
- Allergies.
- Skin irritation in dark, damp areas such as in the diaper area and armpits (*axilla*).

DO NEWBORN RASHES CAUSE ANY PAIN?

Rashes can be irritating and itchy or become painful if they get infected. Contact your baby's health care provider if your baby has a rash and is becoming fussy or seems uncomfortable.

HOW ARE NEWBORN RASHES DIAGNOSED?

To diagnose a rash, your baby's health care provider will:

- Do a physical exam.
- Consider your baby's other symptoms and overall health.
- Take a sample of fluid from any pustules to test in a lab if necessary.

DO NEWBORN RASHES REQUIRE TREATMENT?

Many newborn rashes go away on their own. Some may require treatment, including:

- Changing bathing and clothing routines.
- Using over-the-counter lotions or a cleanser for sensitive skin.
- Lotions and ointments as prescribed by your baby's health care provider.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I THINK MY BABY HAS A NEWBORN RASH?

Talk to your health care provider if you are concerned about your newborn's rash. You can take these steps to care for your newborn's skin:

- Bathe your baby in lukewarm or cool water.
- **Do not** let your child overheat.
- Use recommended lotions or ointments as directed by your health care provider.

CAN NEWBORN RASHES BE PREVENTED?

You can prevent some newborn rashes by:

- Using skin products for sensitive skin.
- Washing your baby only a few times a week.
- Using a gentle cloth for cleansing.
- Patting your baby's skin dry after bathing. Avoid rubbing the skin.

- Using a moisturizer for sensitive skin.
- Preventing overheating, such as taking off extra clothing.
- **Do not** use baby powder to dry damp areas. Breathing in baby powder is not safe for your baby. Your baby's health care provider may advise you instead to sprinkle a small amount of talcum powder in moist areas.

This information is not intended to replace advice given to you by your health care provider. Make sure you discuss any questions you have with your health care provider.

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