



Newborn Skin Conditions

Peeling

Your baby's skin may peel during the first two to four weeks of life. You may notice peeling especially around the soles of your baby's feet. This is normal. No treatment is needed.

Erythema Toxicum

This rash looks like red blotches with white centers. You may see this rash most often on your baby's arms and chest. It will go away in a few days. No visit to the doctor is needed.

Prickly Heat (heat rash, miliaria)

This rash is common during hot weather. It looks like pink or white pimples or blisters with red around them. Most of the time prickly heat is harmless, but in severe cases, the rash can become infected.

You will see prickly heat most often around the neck, under the arms and around the diaper area.

Heat and moisture cause the rash, so don't overdress your baby. Dress your baby like you would dress for hot weather. Place baby in a cool room to sleep.

Don't put creams or oils on this rash; they can make the rash worse. Keep your baby's skin cool by bathing him/her in cool water during hot or humid weather and dress your baby in cool, loose-fitting clothes.

Eczema

This rash is red, itchy and scaly or weeping and appears on dry skin. It is common for babies to have eczema on their faces. As they get older and start to crawl, eczema may appear on their arms and legs.

To treat eczema, bathe your baby less often and use a very gentle soap (example: Dove unscented). You can apply moisturizers like Vaseline or oil to your baby's skin. Don't use a cream with cortisone unless your health care provider approves it.

Dress your baby in soft smooth clothing. Avoid wool. Also, don't lay your baby on wool carpeting; put him on a soft blanket instead.

Cradle Cap

This is an oily skin condition of the scalp that is patchy and scaly. Most infants outgrow cradle cap by one year. If the appearance of the scalp bothers you, here's what you can do. Use a shampoo recommended by your health care provider several times a week along with a soft brush to loosen the flakes. Avoid applying oil or Vaseline to the scalp as this makes the condition worse.

Newborn Acne

This condition shows up as whiteheads, blackheads or pimples on the face. It's harmless; no treatment is needed. Babies outgrow this condition after several months.

Harlequin Effect

This occurs when your baby's skin is different colors (for example, his lower half may be deep red while his upper half is pale). The colors will change when your baby changes positions. This is common in low-birth weight babies. As your baby grows, these harmless color differences will disappear.

Mongolian Spots

These large, bluish black, flat areas are present at birth. They are usually seen on the shoulders, back and buttocks of dark-skinned children. These spots will fade in the first year of life. No treatment is needed.

For more information contact Guilford County Department of Public Health at 641-7777 or www.guilfordhealth.org

