



## BASIC INFORMATION

### DESCRIPTION

Skin irritation in infants. It involves the skin in the area covered by diapers. This includes the genitals, rectum, upper thighs, and lower stomach. Diaper rash is very common.

### FREQUENT SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- Moist, painful, red, spotty, and sometimes itchy skin in the diaper area. The skin may be cracked and split.
- In male infants a red, raw and sometimes bloody area may appear around the opening at the tip of the penis.

### CAUSES

- It is most often a form of contact dermatitis. Diaper rash results from the skin being irritated by moisture in the urine or stool.
- Less often, it may be an allergic reaction. This can be from disposable diapers or baby wipes, or soap used for washing cloth diapers.

### RISK INCREASES WITH

- Not changing diapers often enough.
- Skin gets rubbed from rough diapers.
- Cloth diapers may not be washed properly.
- Family history of skin allergies.
- Hot, humid weather.

### PREVENTIVE MEASURES

- Change diapers often.
- Use diaper products that are breathable. These allow more air to circulate. Breathable disposable diapers, cloth diapers, and diaper covers are available.
- Avoid using plastic pants.
- Leave diaper off for 10 to 30 minutes between diaper changes for air exposure.

### EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Curable with treatment. The rash is rarely serious. Recurrence is common.

### POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS

Skin infection in the rash area.



## DIAGNOSIS & TREATMENT

### GENERAL MEASURES

- Home care is all that is usually needed. See your child's health care provider if you are concerned about the rash.
- Expose the affected skin area to air as when possible.
- Change diapers often, even at night, if the rash is more severe.
- Clean the skin under the diaper with warm water and mild soap that is not perfumed. Baby wipes may also be used, but they might irritate skin in some babies.
- Don't use talcum powder or cornstarch.
- Apply small amounts of petroleum jelly, lanolin ointment, or zinc oxide ointment to the skin at the first sign of diaper rash, and thereafter 2 or 3 times a day.
- After you launder cloth diapers, put them in boiling water for 15 minutes. This will remove any leftover soap and kill any germs.

### MEDICATIONS

Your child's health care provider may recommend medicated ointments or creams to be applied to the skin to help clear up the rash.

### ACTIVITY

No limits.

### DIET

No special diet. Avoid baby foods that cause diarrhea.



## NOTIFY OUR OFFICE IF

- Home treatment doesn't cure the rash in 1 week.
- The following occur during treatment:
  - Fever.
  - Sores develop in the rash area.

Special notes:

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More notes on the back of this page