

ROSEOLA INFANTUM

(Exanthem Subitum)

NOLENSVILLE FAMILY MEDICINE

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BASIC INFORMATION

DESCRIPTION

A common, contagious childhood disease. It usually affects infants and young children (ages 1 to 3 years). 90% of cases occur before age two.

FREQUENT SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- Fever, often high, for several days. It may be the only symptoms until the rash appears.
- Flat, reddish skin rash after 3 to 5 days of high fever. When the rash appears, fever disappears. Some children may never develop the rash.
- Irritability.
- Drowsiness.
- Loss of appetite.

CAUSES

It is caused by a type of herpes virus. (It is not the same herpes virus that causes cold sores.) The fever begins 5 to 15 days (usually 9 days) after exposure. A child is infectious during the fever phase of the illness. It is not known exactly how the infection is spread from one person to another.

RISK INCREASES WITH

- Daycare center.
- Exposure to others in public places.

PREVENTIVE MEASURES

There is no specific way to prevent the infection.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The illness heals on its own in about 1 week.

POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS

- Rarely, convulsions caused by high fever. They will not cause brain damage and will stop after the fever subsides.
- Infection of the brain or hepatitis (both rare).



DIAGNOSIS & TREATMENT

GENERAL MEASURES

- Parents can usually treat the disorder without medical care. Call your child's health care provider if you have any concern about the symptoms. The disorder can usually be diagnosed without any medical tests, but a blood or urine study may be done.
- There is no specific treatment for roseola. Rest at home, drink extra fluids, and drug therapy to reduce the fever if needed.
- Lukewarm water bath or sponge bath may be used to reduce the fever if it reaches 102°F (38.9°C) or higher.

MEDICATIONS

- For relief from minor discomfort and to reduce fever, you may use nonprescription drugs such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen. Don't give aspirin to children under age 18.
- Antibiotics will not help a virus infection.
- Anticonvulsant drugs (if child has seizure) may be prescribed.

ACTIVITY

The child should rest in bed until the fever disappears.

DIET

The child should eat a normal, well-balanced diet. Encourage extra fluid intake. Continue baby-vitamin supplements if the child is accustomed to taking them.



NOTIFY OUR OFFICE IF

- Your child has symptoms of roseola.
- High fever occurs.
- Twitching or other signs of a convulsion begin.
- The child refuses liquids.
- The child cries loudly and persistently, and does not stop when picked up.
- The child is listless and has a stiff neck.

Special notes:

More notes on the back of this page