



PUBLIC FACT SHEET

DIAPER RASH: PREVENTION AND TREATMENT

What does diaper rash look like?

Diaper rash usually causes redness and scaling where the diaper touches the baby's skin. In bad cases, the rash can cause pimples, blisters and other sores. If the rash gets infected it may be bright red and the skin may be swollen.

What causes diaper rash?

Diaper rash is caused by skin irritation from diapers that rub against the skin, fit too tightly or are left on for too long. Skin can also be irritated by soap used to wash cloth diapers, or by some brands of disposable diapers or baby wipes. Heat, moisture and irritated skin make it easier for diaper rash to start and for germs to grow.

How is diaper rash prevented and treated?

- Keep baby's diaper area clean, cool and dry.
- Change your baby's diaper often and allow the skin to dry completely before putting on another diaper.
- Use a washcloth with plain warm (not hot) water instead of baby wipes if your baby gets a diaper rash often or use water in a squirt bottle to clean and rinse without rubbing.
- Use creams that contain zinc oxide (such as Desitin) or petrolatum (such as Vaseline) to protect baby's skin from moisture.
- Avoid using plastic pants.
- Do not use baby powder.

- If diaper rash persists, change the type of wipes, diapers or soap you are using.

Call your doctor if:

- The diaper rash occurs in the first 6 weeks of life.
- The rash has blisters or pus-filled sores.
- The baby has a fever.
- Your baby loses weight or isn't eating as well as usual.
- The rash spreads to other areas (such as the arms, face or scalp).
- The rash doesn't get better after 1 week of trying the prevention tips listed above.

For more information on diaper rash:

Ottawa County Health Department
www.miOttawa.org

American Academy of Pediatrics
www.aap.org