

# Pediatrics

## RASH (WITHOUT ITCHING)

### What is causing the rash?

A red or pink rash that is smooth or slightly bumpy and doesn't itch could have many causes.

If it is all over your child's body (widespread) some possible causes include:

- viral illness (such as chickenpox, roseola, or measles)
- reaction to a medicine or vaccine (such as the antibiotic amoxicillin or a measles shot)
- heat or sun exposure (such as heat rash or sunburn)
- a fever over 103°F (39.5°C) can cause a pinkness of the skin that may be blotchy.

A rash that occurs in just one spot (localized) also has many possible causes including:

- rashes common to babies (such as cradle cap, drooling rash, milia, erythema toxicum, or diaper rash)
- acne or boils
- chemical or irritant on the skin
- infections (such as impetigo or ringworm).

### How can I take care of my child?

- **Widespread rash** If the rash is due to a virus, no treatment is necessary. These rashes usually disappear within 48 hours. If the redness is caused by a fever, it will clear when the fever comes down. For other causes see related topics.
- **Localized rash** Localized red rashes can be due to a chemical or other irritant your child got on his skin. In such cases, no special treatment is necessary. Wash the skin once with soap to remove any irritating substances. Thereafter, cleanse it only with water. Don't use any medications or petroleum jelly on this rash. If the rash seems dry, apply hand lotion twice a day. If it becomes itchy, apply 1% hydrocortisone cream (no prescription needed) 4 times a day. For other causes see related topics.

### When should I call my child's health care provider?

Call IMMEDIATELY if:

- The rash becomes purple or has blood-colored spots or dots.
- The rash becomes bright red AND tender to the touch

Call during office hours if:

- Your child develops a fever (over 100°F, or 37.8°C).
- Your child has had a widespread rash for more than 48 hours.
- A localized rash lasts more than 1 week.
- You have other concerns or questions.

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