

# Rashes and skin conditions

## A common problem that's easy to treat

### Nappy rash

Nappy rash is very common and can affect lots of babies. It is usually caused when your baby's skin comes into contact with wetness that collects in their nappy. A nappy rash causes your baby's skin to become sore. The skin in this area may be covered in red spots or blotches. You should change their nappy more often.

Most nappy rashes can be treated with a simple skincare routine and by using a cream you can get from the pharmacist. There are two types of nappy cream available. One is a barrier cream to keep wetness away from your baby's skin. The other is a medicated cream, that is good for clearing up any soreness but should only be used when advised by a health professional. With a mild nappy rash, your baby won't normally feel too much discomfort.

If the rash doesn't go away it could be a sign of thrush or your child may have an infections and will need treatment. Seek help from you health visitor.

### Eczema

Eczema is common in babies and they normally grow out of the condition, it often starts between the ages of two and four months. See [Managing eczema](#) for more information.

### Headlice

A rash at the back of the neck could be a sign of headlice. The skin may also be itchy. Some treatments are not suitable if your child is under two years old, has asthma or you are breastfeeding. Check with your pharmacist. See the link for video information:

[www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Head-lice](http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Head-lice)

See if your local pharmacy offers the [Head Lice Treatment Scheme](#).

### Meningitis

One of the symptoms of meningitis is a rash – see [Meningitis](#).

For further information on skin rashes please visit [www.nhs.uk/conditions/skin-rash-children/Pages/Introduction.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/skin-rash-children/Pages/Introduction.aspx)

## Health visitor's nappy rash tips

Leave your baby in a warm, safe place with no clothes or nappy on, to let the air get to their skin.

Use a barrier cream.

Remember to change and check their nappy often.

## Slapped cheek

Slapped cheek syndrome gets its name from the bright red rash that appears on the cheeks. Like other viruses, such as colds and flu, your baby can catch slapped cheek syndrome from an infected person coughing or sneezing near them.

The rash can look alarming but it is a mild infection that clears up by itself in one to three weeks. It usually starts with a fever and other flu-like symptoms, such as a sore throat, a headache and feeling tired.

Some babies won't have all of the symptoms of slapped cheek syndrome. If you are worried you may want to take your baby to your GP to confirm that it is slapped cheek syndrome.

Most pregnant women who get slapped cheek syndrome have healthy babies. However, depending on what stage of pregnancy you're at, there's a small risk of miscarriage or complications for your unborn baby. If you're pregnant and may have been exposed to the virus, you should see your GP, midwife or call **NHS 111**.

## Hand, foot and mouth

It is a common infection that mostly affects children under 10 and causes mouth ulcers and spots on the hands and feet.

Symptoms may include a high temperature (fever), usually around 38-39°C, a general sense of feeling unwell, tummy pain and a sore throat and mouth. After one or two days, red spots appear on the tongue and inside the mouth.

These quickly develop into larger yellow-grey mouth ulcers with red edges. Hand, foot and mouth disease usually clears up by itself, within about a week. If you're worried, contact your health visitor or GP.

To help ease your child's symptoms make sure they drink plenty of fluids to avoid dehydration and eat soft foods such as mashed potatoes, yoghurt and soups (or continue to breast or bottle feed as usual).

You should keep your child away from nursery until they're feeling better.

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### **1**

There is a red, sore rash around the nappy area. Baby is uncomfortable and cries a lot.

### **2**

Has baby been in a dirty nappy for a long time? Have you followed advice from your health visitor, or spoken to your pharmacist?

### **3**

Change nappies often. Speak to your health visitor and if you are still worried, your GP.