



Newborn Rashes

Patient and Family Education

What is neonatal acne?

At times, babies develop a skin rash (small red bumps on the cheeks, chin or forehead) that looks like the acne seen in teenagers. The bumps may be present at birth or start in the first few weeks of life. The rash may last until 4 to 6 months of age. Because the rash is temporary, no treatment is needed. Daily cleansing with warm water will help. Baby oils, lotions and soap can make the rash worse.

What is milia?

Many newborns have blocked skin pores on their face that are called milia. Milia looks like tiny white or yellow bumps on the nose, cheeks, forehead or chin. They are smaller than pimples and are not infected. Because milia will open up and disappear during the first few months of life, no treatment is needed. Do not try to squeeze the bumps. No creams or ointments are needed.

What is erythema toxicum?

More than half of babies get a rash in the first few days of life called erythema toxicum. The cause of this rash is unknown. The rash looks like red blotches (one-half to one inch in size) with a small white bump in the center. Blotches can appear anywhere on the body. A blotch may last from a few hours to several days. The rash is harmless and usually goes away by 2 weeks of age, so no treatment is needed. Baby oils, lotions and ointments can make the rash worse.

When should I call the doctor?

Call your child's doctor:

- For any rash that does not improve as expected
- If there is any other symptom of illness such as a rectal temperature over 100.3°F or unusual sleepiness
- For any blisters (small, fluid filled bumps) that occur during the first month of life
- Enlarged areas of redness
- Pimples larger than an eraser head
- Multiple blisters on a single patch of redness
- If your baby seems ill

In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room right away.

This is general information and is not specific medical advice for your child. Always consult your child's doctor or other healthcare provider if you have any questions or concerns about the care or health of your child. A Children's Healthcare of Atlanta pediatric advice nurse is available 24 hours a day at 404-250-KIDS.