

Self-care information on...

Nappy rash



What is nappy rash?

Nappy rash is a very common skin condition, where by the skin becomes inflamed. It's called nappy rash as it is generally confined to the area of the nappy. Most babies will develop nappy rash in the first 18 months of their lives.

What causes nappy rash?

- Prolonged contact with urine (wee) or stools (poo).
- Sensitive skin.
- Rubbing or chafing.
- Soap, detergent or bubble bath.
- Baby wipes.
- Diarrhoea or other illness.

There may be red patches on your baby's bottom, or the whole area may be red. The skin may look sore and feel hot to touch, and there may be spots, pimples or blisters.

What can I do to prevent or clear a nappy rash?

- Change wet or dirty nappies as soon as possible. This can be up to 12 times a day for young babies.
- Clean the whole nappy area, wipe from front to back – use plain water with cotton wool.
- Lay your baby on a towel and leave the nappy off for as long as possible, this will allow fresh air to get to the skin.
- Wash your baby daily and avoid soaps, bubble bath and lotions.
- Make sure the area is thoroughly dried.
- Use a barrier cream such as Sudocrem® or nappy rash ointments and creams e.g. Metanium® and Bepanthen® to protect the skin from moisture. Apply a very thin layer just before putting on each nappy.

If you are unsure speak to your health visitor or pharmacist for advice.

When to contact your health visitor

- Your baby has a fever.
- Rash does not clear up with the treatment described above or gets worse.
- Your baby appears to be in extreme discomfort.
- Rash appears infected.
 - A persistent bright red, moist rash with white or red pimples, which spreads to the folds of the skin, suggests a fungal infection called nappy thrush. Your health visitor or pharmacist may recommend treatment with an antifungal cream e.g. Canesten). These products can be purchased from a pharmacy.

If you need any further information:

- Ask your pharmacist
- NHS choices: www.nhs.uk
- Patient UK www.patient.co.uk

