



Your Baby's Skin



Your baby's skin is especially delicate and needs special care. Lotions and creams are usually not necessary for healthy skin, unless your baby will be exposed to sunlight or bugs. Some skin conditions are common in babies. If your baby develops a skin condition not mentioned here, contact your doctor for diagnosis and treatment.

Diaper Rash

- Change your baby's diaper often to prevent diaper rash.
- Use over-the-counter ointments and creams to keep wetness off while the diaper is on.
- During each diaper change, wipe the area clean with a wet washcloth or baby wipes.
- Allow the diaper area to dry before putting on a clean diaper.
- When diaper rash occurs, air is usually the best cure.
- If the diaper area is solid dark red, it may indicate a yeast infection. Call your baby's doctor.

Baby Acne

- Many newborns get red pimplelike bumps caused by hormones built up during delivery that increase oil production in the skin.
- The rash usually appears on the face.
- Wash the skin with a gentle soap as usual.
- If the rash gets worse or doesn't go away after a few weeks, contact your doctor.

Eczema

- Dry, itchy, scaly red patches on the face, in the bends of the elbows and behind the knees is usually eczema.
- Ask your doctor about treatment.
- Avoid using over-the-counter lotions or creams unless your doctor instructs you to.
- Only bathe your baby a few times a week; frequent baths may make the skin condition worse.
- To prevent a recurrence, make sure you use mild soap on your baby and his clothes and dress him in soft clothing. Avoid wool or rough weaves.

Cradle Cap

- Yellow scaly flakes on any part of baby's scalp is called cradle cap.
- It's not harmful or uncomfortable to your baby.
- The exact cause of cradle cap is not known.
- Shampoo your baby's head more than usual with a mild baby shampoo, and brush with a soft brush to remove the scales.
- Soften the flakes by putting baby oil on the scalp for a few minutes. Gently comb or brush the flakes off and thoroughly remove all the baby oil with shampoo; it can encourage scales to build up on the scalp if it's left on.

Sunburn

- Babies' skin can sunburn very easily, even in the shade when indirect sunlight bounces off bright objects to cause "shade" burns.
- Always keep babies out of direct sunlight.
- It's safe to use sunscreen on babies after 2 months of age.
- Only use nongreasy sunscreen that won't dry out and won't get rubbed into your baby's eyes.
- It's not necessary to use baby brands of sunscreen, unless they're less greasy.
- Use sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 20 or higher.
- Always keep a T-shirt and hat or bonnet on your baby.

Insect Bites

- It's OK to use a bug repellent on your baby after 2 months of age.
- Some caution should be used in putting chemicals on your baby's body, but in most cases, disease-carrying bug bites are worse than the chemicals in bug repellent.
- Try to find a repellent with the lowest percentage of the active ingredient.
- To use a bug repellent on your baby, spray it onto your hands, then lightly touch exposed areas on the baby.