



Rash (Widespread) Protocol



Symptom Definition

- Rash over most of body
 - widespread or generalized
 - Occasionally, just on hands, feet, and buttocks-but symmetrical
- Red or pink rash
- Smooth (macular) or slightly bumpy
- Small spots, large spots, or solid red
- Many causes

Life-threatening Emergency: Call 911

- If the rash started within the last 2 hours and any difficulty with breathing or swallowing
- If the rash is purple or blood-colored spots and there is also a fever
- If your child is too weak to sit, stand, or walk

See immediately if:

- Rash is purple or blood-colored spots or dots
- Bright red and tender to the touch
- Bad headache and if there is also a fever

See within 24 hours by appointment if:

- Child has a fever
- Child has a sore throat
- Rash has been present longer than 3 days
- Rash is quite itchy

Treatment:

- **For non-itchy rashes:** No treatment is necessary, except for heat rashes, which respond to cool baths.
- **For itchy rashes:** wash the skin once with soap to remove irritants. Give your child a cool bath every 3 to 4 hours unless he or she has dry skin. After the bath, apply calamine lotion (nonprescription) or a baking soda solution (1 tsp in 4 oz of water).
- **Steroid cream:** For very itchy spots, apply a 1% hydrocortisone cream (no prescription needed) unless your child has chickenpox.



- **Avoid scratching:** Encourage your child not to scratch. Cut his or her fingernails short.
- **Avoid triggers:** Your child should not wear itchy or tight clothes and should temporarily avoid excessive heat, sweating, soaps, and swimming pools.
- **Contagiousness:** Avoid contact with other children and especially with pregnant women. Most viral rashes are contagious (especially if a fever is present).
- **Expected course:** Most rashes seen with viral infections disappear within 48 hours.