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## *Rashes of Infancy*

Many infants suffer from occasional mild breakouts. These are three of the most common kinds.

### **BABY ACNE**

Babies often get acne, usually after the second week of life. It usually peaks around the third week and clears up within a month or six weeks.

**What it looks like:** Tiny white bumps or yellow spots across the tip of the nose or chin, sometimes on the shoulders. The bumps look raised but feel almost flat and smooth.

**Causes:** Just as in adolescence, hormones are to blame. In this case, however, it's the mother's hormones--- still circulating in her baby's system---that cause the problem.

**Treatment:** Most baby acne will go away by itself if you leave it alone. Avoid touching or squeezing the pimples or applying any lotions or creams. Wash occasionally with gentle soap.

### **CRADLE CAP**

Although the condition can look unsightly, it's very common and no cause for concern.

**What it looks like:** Cradle cap looks like crusty, scaly patches on your newborn's scalp and sometimes on the forehead.

**Causes:** It's thought to be a result of hormonal changes that stimulate secretions from the oil glands.

**Treatment:** Rub a mild mineral oil into your baby's scalp and wash daily with a gentle baby shampoo. Consult a pediatrician if the condition persists, worsens, or spreads.

## **ECZEMA**

Unlike some rashes that look worse than they feel, eczema is actually quite uncomfortable and causes a great deal of itching. Indeed, some newborns and young babies may try to relieve the itch by rubbing up against things.

**What it looks like:** Dry, crusting red patches on the cheeks, back, torso, scalp, or chin.

**Causes:** Excessively dry skin, and, less likely, food sensitivities or allergies.

**Treatment:** Lubricate the skin with a cream or ointment. Dressing your baby in light, loose clothing may be helpful too. If the condition doesn't improve or if the patches crust, ooze, or weep, call your pediatrician.