

# Nappy Rash

*A baby's skin is very sensitive compared to ours. That's why it is easily irritated. For some babies, when left wet for a long period of time the skin becomes red and irritated and will cause nappy rash. Thus, it is better to prevent it than to treat it once it has occurred.*

## WHAT IS NAPPY RASH?

Nappy rash also known as diaper rash, is a red, irritating skin rash in and around the area covered by the nappy. It affects the genitals, buttocks, groin and thighs.

## WHAT CAUSES NAPPY RASH?

Nappy rash may occur when the sensitive baby's skin comes into contact with: -

- \* Urine, especially when the nappy is left for a long period. The chemical irritation from ammonia, produced by urine will break down the protective barrier normally formed by the skin. This will cause redness and inflammation.
- \* Baby's stools, especially loose stools which may be caused by the baby's diet, certain medicines or when teething.
- \* Chemicals, when certain types of soaps or detergents are used for washing the nappies. (Ask your pharmacist or medical practitioner)

## SYMPTOMS

- \* It is red, slightly rough and scaly on the buttocks, genitals, groins, and thighs.
- \* If it is infected, the nappy area will appear brighter red covered with a shiny rash with sharply outlined patches, often with smaller spots out of the main area.

## SELF CARE

- \* Expose the nappy area to the air. Leave the nappy off when possible especially if the rash is severe.
- \* Change wet or dirty nappies immediately as soon as you notice them.

- \* Wash the baby's bottom at every change to remove any urine or moisture with warm water or sorbolone cream well diluted with water (ask your pharmacist).
- \* Apply a protective cream at each nappy change (e.g. aqueous cream, a mineral oil or wool fat lotion, zinc and castor oil cream etc.)
- \* Do not wash the affected area with soap too often; once or twice a week is enough.
- \* Avoid using talcum / baby powder or plastic pants.
- \* Use special soft nappy liners that help protect the sensitive skin.
- \* Try to eliminate new food or chemicals, which may be the cause.
- \* If you use a cloth nappy, make sure it is rinsed well after washing.

## AVOID

- \* Leaving your baby in a wet or dirty nappy.
- \* Regular use of plastic pants, especially at night.
- \* Using cortisone cream before trying self-care above, you may be treating the symptoms only and not the cause.

## REFERENCE:

1. Malaysia Healthcare Guide.

### Website:

- <http://www.dermnet.org.nz/dna.nappy.dermatitis/nrash.html>

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Self Care Guide, Pharmaceutical Services Division, Ministry of Health Malaysia

[http://www.pharmacy.gov.my/self\\_care\\_guide](http://www.pharmacy.gov.my/self_care_guide)

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