



Skin rashes



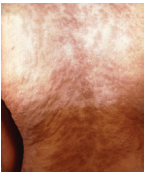
The chart lists signs and symptoms of skin rashes, what it could be, what to do about them, and self-care.

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS	WHAT IT COULD BE	WHAT TO DO	SELF-CARE
Raised areas on skin that are red or pink (medium or light skin) or are the same skin color (brown or black skin) that can change shape, fade, then rapidly reappear. May come and go anywhere on the body. Itching.	Hives , usually due to an allergic reaction. 	Call 9-1-1 if hives come with a hard time breathing or swallowing, wheezing, severe swelling all over or of the face, lips, tongue and/or throat (severe allergic reaction). {Note: If you have an emergency epinephrine-pen (epi-pen) for an allergy, use it and follow other instructions before medical care.} For hives without a severe allergic reaction, see doctor for severe hives or for attacks of hives that recur.	Avoid substance that caused allergic reaction. Take an over-the-counter (OTC) antihistamine as advised by your doctor. Take a lukewarm (not hot) shower or bath. Add baking soda or an oatmeal bath product to bath water. Apply a cold compress or calamine lotion to itchy areas. Wear loose-fitting clothes. Don't take aspirin, ibuprofen, ketoprofen, or naproxen sodium. Relax as much as you can.
Rash of flat, deep red or purple spots in areas where there's pressure on the skin. Other symptoms include high fever; stiff neck; severe headache that persists; vomiting; lethargy; seizure; sensitivity to light; and bulging of the fontanelle (soft spot of the skull) in an infant.	Meningococemia from a meningitis infection.*	Get emergency medical care fast!	After medical care, follow your doctor's advice.
Rash on the trunk of the body with fever, headache, bodyaches, and swollen lymph glands	West Nile virus , 3 to 15 days after a bite from a mosquito infected with the virus.	See doctor right away.	Follow your doctor's advice.
Pink to red rash on the arms, legs, and palms of the hands. Often starts near the wrists and ankles, then spreads inward. Rash darkens in color, spreads, and can bleed. Sudden high fever with chills, severe headache, and delirium also occur.	Rocky mountain spotted fever , 1 to 14 days after a bite from an American dog tick or Rocky Mountain woodtick. 	Contact doctor right away.	Follow your doctor's advice.
Rash of painful red blisters (most often on only one side and in only one area of the body). Pain, itching, burning, or tingling feeling before the rash appeared.	Shingles from the herpes zoster virus.* (Persons who have not had chicken pox or a vaccine for it can get chicken pox from exposure to shingles.) 	See doctor or health care provider within 72 hours for an oral antiviral medicine. This can shorten the course of shingles and make symptoms less severe. { Note: adults 50 years of age and older are advised to get a vaccine that can help prevent shingles and reduce the pain due to shingles.}	Take pain relievers as advised by your doctor. For itching, apply calamine lotion or a paste made of 3 teaspoons of baking soda mixed with 1 teaspoon of water to the affected area. Apply a cool, wet compress to blisters for 20 minutes at a time. Wash (don't scrub) blisters until they crust over. Drink plenty of liquids.

* These conditions are contagious.

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Rough, bright red rash (feels like sandpaper) on the face, neck, elbows, armpits, and groin. It spreads rapidly to entire body. A high fever and weakness occur before the rash. Other symptoms include sore throat, peeling of the skin, vomiting, an swollen tongue.	Scarlet fever. This is caused by a bacterial infection.* 	See doctor or health care provider for diagnosis. Can be treated with antibiotics.	Take over-the-counter medicine for fever or pain. Gargle with salt water to help relieve throat pain. Use anti-itch skin creams, like calamine lotion, if the rash itches.
A fever and red rash 3 days to 2 weeks after a blacklegged tick bite. The rash has raised edges with pale centers. It fades after a few days. Joint pain may develop later.	Lyme disease. This is caused by a deer tick bite. 	See doctor or health care provider for diagnosis. Can be treated with an antibiotic.	Follow your doctor's advice.
Widespread red rash on the palms of the hands, soles of the feet, and sometimes around the mouth and nose. The small, red, scaly bumps do not itch. Other types of rashes, swollen lymph nodes, fever, and flu-like symptoms may also occur.	Syphilis. This is a sexually transmitted disease caused by a specific bacterial infection.* 	See doctor or health care provider for diagnosis. Can be treated with an antibiotic.	Follow your doctor's advice.
Tiny red pimples that itch intensely, usually between the fingers, on the wrists and genitals; in the armpits; and along the belt line. Scabs and sores may form.	Scabies. This is caused by skin parasites called itch mites.* 	See doctor or health care provider for diagnosis. Can be treated with a prescribed and over-the-counter topical medicine.	Follow your doctor's instructions. Wash clothing and bedding in hot water and detergent.
Redness, itchy, scaly patches on the skin or scalp that are round with distinct edges that grow outward as the infection spreads. Moistness in the folds of the skin (under the breasts or in the groin area). Bald spots may appear on the scalp.	Ringworm. This is caused by a fungal infection.* 	See doctor or health care provider for diagnosis and treatment, especially if you have not had this before or if ringworm occurs on the scalp or in several patches on the skin.	Follow your doctor's advice.
Dry, red, itchy patches of skin. Leathery patches that are darker than usual on brown or Black skin. Blisters which may drain and then crust over.	Contact dermatitis. Causes are direct contact with poison ivy, oak, or sumac or contact with an irritant (cleaning product, cosmetic, jewelry, etc.). 	See doctor or health care provider if self-care measures don't bring relief or if there are signs of infection (e.g., red streaks, fever, pus, increased redness, swelling, or pain).	Try to identify the irritant and avoid direct contact with it. Don't scratch the rash. For itching, apply calamine lotion or OTC hydrocortisone cream to the affected area. Bathe in warm (not hot) water. Add an oatmeal product to the water. Pat (don't rub) the skin dry. Take an OTC antihistamine as advised.
Patches of skin that are dry, red, scaly, blistered, swollen, and sometimes thick, discolored, or oozing and crusting. Commonly occurs on the hands, neck, ankles, feet, and in the bend of the elbow or behind the knee.	Eczema (atopic dermatitis). This tends to run in families. It is common in persons with asthma or allergies. Contact with irritants may worsen eczema. 	See doctor or health care provider if self-care measures don't bring relief or if there are signs of infection (e.g., red streaks, fever, pus, increased redness, swelling, or pain).	Use an OTC hydrocortisone cream on the affected area. Don't scratch. Don't bathe too often. When you do, use warm (not hot) water and a mild soap (or no soap). Use a light, nongreasy, unscented moisturizer (without alcohol) after you wash. Avoid items that worsen the eczema.

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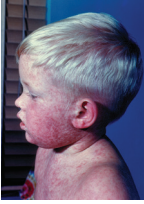


SIGNS & SYMPTOMS	WHAT IT COULD BE	WHAT TO DO	SELF-CARE
Red rash on the face. Red nose that looks swollen and puffy cheeks. May have spider veins and pus-filled pimples.	Rosacea (adult acne). The exact cause is not known. Risk factors include family history and skin that burn easily.	See doctor or health care provider if rosacea affects large areas of skin and/or if self-care measures don't bring relief.	Avoid hot and/or spicy foods, alcohol, and caffeine. Don't rub or massage the face. Avoid strong sunlight and use SPF 30+ sunscreen.
Itchy, red patches covered with silvery-white flaky skin. Common sites are the scalp, elbows, forearms, knees, and legs. May also have thick, ridged, pitted nails.	Psoriasis. This is a chronic skin disease that tends to run in families. It is likely caused by an overactive immune system, which is triggered by certain environmental factors. 	See doctor or health care provider if psoriasis affects large areas of skin and/or if self-care measures don't bring relief.	Bathe in lukewarm water using mild soap. Apply moisturizer while skin is still damp. Use an OTC hydrocortisone or coal tar ointment. For scalp psoriasis, use an antidandruff shampoo.
Flat, red spots that become raised and look like small pimples. These develop into small blisters that break and crust over. Fatigue and mild fever occur 24 hours before rash appears. Itching may be intense.	Chickenpox. This is caused by the varicella-zoster virus.* 	See doctor or health care provider if it occurs in an adult; if self-care measures don't bring relief in children; or if there are signs of infection (e.g., pus, increased redness, swelling, or pain) or fever. A vaccine is given to prevent this disease.	Keep from scratching affected areas. Apply cool, wet washcloths with baking soda or calamine lotion to affected areas. Take acetaminophen for fever. Take an OTC antihistamine as advised by your doctor if itching is intense. Chickenpox can be prevented with a chickenpox vaccine.
Scaly, itchy, oily rash with small, reddish-yellow patches. Areas affected are usually oily ones (the edge of the scalp, forehead, nose, and eyebrows) and the back and chest.	Seborrhea. This is a type of dermatitis. The glands in the skin make too much oil.	See doctor or health care provider if self-care measures don't bring relief or if there are signs of infection (e.g., red streaks, fever, pus, increased redness, swelling, or pain).	Use an OTC antidandruff shampoo with salicylic acid on the scalp area. Use OTC hydrocortisone cream on the affected skin areas. Handle the skin gently. Don't scratch. Avoid or limit hair styling products.
Small patches of rough skin and tiny pimples (in babies), on the buttocks, thighs, and/or genitals. Soreness without itching. More severe cases may include painful, open blisters.	Diaper rash. This is a type of dermatitis due to dampness and the interaction of urine and the skin. 	See doctor or health care provider if there are blisters or small red patches outside the diaper area (e.g., the chest). Otherwise, use self-care.	Change diapers as soon as they are wet. Wash the area with warm water. Avoid wipes that contain alcohol or fragrance. Keep the skin dry. Apply zinc oxide ointment to the skin. Keep the diaper loose, especially overnight.
In infants, pus-filled blisters and red skin. In older children, golden crusts on red sores. Areas affected are the arms, legs, face, and around the nose first, then most of body. Sometimes fever. Occasional itching.	Impetigo. This is caused by a bacterial infection.* 	See doctor or health care provider, especially if self-care measures don't bring relief, if blisters are larger than 1 inch across, or if a red streak runs from the infection. An antibiotic may need to be prescribed.	Clean the area with mild soap several times a day. Apply an OTC antibiotic ointment 3 times a day after the scab falls off. Wash your hands after contact with the rash area. Wash their clothes, bedclothes, and towels every day in hot water.
Flat, rosy red, non-itchy rash on the chest, abdomen, arms, and legs. A high fever occurs 2 to 4 days before the rash. The child feels only mildly ill when the fever is present.	Roseola. This is caused by the Herpes type-6 virus. Also known as sixth disease. 	See doctor or health care provider if high fever causes febrile seizure.	Take acetaminophen for fever. Apply cool, wet washcloths or take baths with tepid (not cold) water. Drink plenty of fluids.

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SIGNS & SYMPTOMS	WHAT IT COULD BE	WHAT TO DO	SELF-CARE
Blotchy red rash that starts on the face and spreads to the rest of the body 3 to 5 days after exposure. Rash lasts about 7 days. These signs come before the rash: Fever; runny nose; sneezing; cough; eyes that look red and are sensitive to light; and blue-white spots in the mouth.	Measles. This is caused by a virus.* MMR vaccines prevent measles. 	Call doctor right away to be sure the problem is measles. If it is, follow the doctor's advice. Let the child's school and the local health department know.	Rest until fever and rash go away. Drink lots of liquids. For fever, take acetaminophen. Treat cough. For achiness, take OTC, non-aspirin pain relievers. Usually okay to return to school about 7 to 10 days after rash and fever are gone.
Red rash of varying shades that fades to a flat, lacy pattern. Rash comes and goes. It usually starts on the facial cheeks and then on the arms and legs. This is a mild disease, usually with no other symptoms.	Fifth Disease. This is caused by the Human parvovirus B19.* 	Use self-care, but no special treatment is required.	Take OTC, non-aspirin, pain relievers for possible fever, headaches, and mild joint pain. Avoid hot or even warm baths or showers. Keep cool.
Rash with small red pimples, pink blotchy skin, and itching. Common sites are between skin folds (armpits, under the breasts, the groin).	Heat rash (prickly heat) or chafing. This occurs from too much sweating.	Use self-care.	Take cool showers without soap every couple of hours. Let your skin air dry. Apply calamine lotion to very itchy spots. Don't use ointments and creams that can block sweat gland pores. Stay in a cool, dry area.
Scaly, crusty rash (in newborns) that starts behind the ears and spreads to the scalp. Usually not itchy. May also appear on eyelids and groin.	Cradle cap. This is due to hormones that pass through the placenta before birth.	See doctor if self-care does not provide relief or if the patches have spread to your baby's face or body.	Apply mineral oil to the scalp to soften the hard crusts, then use a baby shampoo. Do this daily, massaging the scalp with your fingers, a soft brush, or washcloth for 5 minutes. Be sure to wash all of the oil out.

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