



RASH (ITCHY)

Itchy and red, spotty, blotchy, bumpy, scaly, rough or blistered skin

CAUSES

PITYRIASIS ROSEA

The cause of this type of rash is still undetermined but pityriasis rosea typically lasts for about six weeks. A viral infection is suspected in setting off this rash. It is, however, not contagious and not related to food, medicine or stress. Teenagers and young adults are more likely to be affected by this type of rash.

Symptoms:

- A single patch called the Herald Patch appears one to 20 days before the general rash makes an appearance. During the course of a few days, smaller versions of the mother patch appear usually at the trunk but may spread to the thighs, neck and upper arms. When healed, it leaves no scars. However, lightly discolored marks are left on the skin of dark-skinned people.

DO:

- Use a steroid cream or ointment to reduce itching. This cream, however, does not speed up the clearance of the rash. The rash will run its course.
- Use moisturizers.

DON'T:

- Do not bathe with soap as the rash will react. Showering with water and bath oil or any other soap substitute is advisable.

OTHER CAUSES

Fungal infections or heat rash may be other causes of an itchy rash.

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PSORIASIS

Psoriasis is characterized by thick, red patches of dry skin. These red patches are caused by the excessive growth and shedding of skin cells.

Typically, it takes about 30 days for skin to mature and then shed from the body. In psoriasis, the skin cells mature in as fast as four days. The hyper growth's cause is still unknown although genetic heritage is linked to this condition.

Psoriasis is not contagious but those afflicted feel embarrassment because the red patches are unsightly to others.

Symptoms:

- Red patches covered with white, silvery scales that appear on the elbows, eyes, hands, knees, nails, scalp and trunk
- Abnormal appearance of nails, either pitted, cracked, deformed or loose
- Dandruff-like particles from scalp in severe cases.

DO:

- Changing diet is often helpful in fighting psoriasis. Avoid consumption of red meat, high-fat foods, and excessive alcohol as this can trigger a bout with psoriasis.
- Change lifestyle to counter stress and infections,
- Apply petroleum jelly to the affected areas of the skin to help moisturize the patches.

DON'T:

- Don't drink alcohol.



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ROSACEA

Rosacea appears as a perpetual blush on the face caused by dilated blood vessels found under the skin. When a person blushes, the blood vessels dilate, bringing blood close to the surface of the skin. After a while, the vessels constrict taking the blush away. However, in rosacea, the blood vessels do not constrict anymore.

Stress, alcohol, caffeine, exposure to sunlight, heat, and spicy foods can aggravate rosacea. It can never be completely cured but the redness and other symptoms can be controlled. It is sometimes called *adult acne*.

Symptoms:

- Flushed-looking skin on the cheeks, nose or forehead
- Visible web-like blood vessels
- Overgrown oil glands that appear as bumpy, yellow-range raised spots like pimples

DO:

- Washing the face with a soap-free cleanser and an oil-free moisturizer will help.
- For women who wear make-up, apply a thin layer of concealer on the affected areas and blend lightly before applying foundation.
- Consult a dermatologist.

DON'T:

- Don't touch or rub the face.
- Do not smoke.
- Don't drink alcohol and caffeine.

TINEA VERSICOLOR

Tinea versicolor is a common skin fungal infection that is caused by the overgrowth of a skin surface yeast. The fungal infection results in the appearance of tan-colored oval patches with defined borders.

If exposed to heat, a person with tinea versicolor may experience slight itchiness. A person with naturally oily skin is more likely to be affected than a person who has dry skin.

Tinea versicolor is not a serious condition. However, prescription anti-fungal medications should be sought from a dermatologist.

Symptoms:

- Patches that are tan-to-pink in color which appear on a person's upper arms, chest, back, neck and face.

DO:

- Wash the affected areas of the body with anti-dandruff shampoo to help clear the rash and discourage recurrence.
- Apply anti-fungal creams on the affected areas and wash hands afterwards.
- While treatment for tinea versicolor is ongoing, wash bed linens and towels everyday to prevent reinfection.

DON'T:

- Don't use harsh soaps. Use soap substitutes instead.



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LYME DISEASE

A person can get Lyme disease from a tick bite though not all ticks are carriers of the bacteria which causes the disease. If the tick is observed and removed within 24 hours, chances of being afflicted by Lyme disease are small.

However, if a bull's eye rash is spotted on any part of the body accompanied by other symptoms, medical help is necessary.

Lyme disease affects the heart, joints and nerves of the body.

Symptoms:

- A red bull's eye rash on any part of the body
- Aching muscles, fever, fatigue
- Swelling of joints not connected to arthritis

DO:

- After spending time outdoors or in wooded areas, make sure that you, your clothing and even your pet are free of ticks.
- If symptoms are observed, seek medical assistance.

DON'T:

- Don't forget to use protective clothes and insect repellent when going to wooded areas.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN SPOTTED FEVER (RMSF)

Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever can be acquired through a tick bite carrying a type of bacteria that results in a high fever (103 degrees Fahrenheit or higher). It takes six hours for the bacteria to pass from tick to human being. Prompt removal of the tick can only be beneficial if great care is employed.

Symptoms:

- High fever, chills, headache, severe weakness and muscle pain especially in the large muscle of the calf.
- Confusion and delirium
- A characteristic rash marks the stages of RMSF: the rash, marked by flat, pink marks on the wrists and ankles called *macules*, develops on the fourth day of illness. It slowly spreads to almost every part of the body and turns red-purple after a few days. The rash, now called *petechiae*, signals tiny areas of bleeding beneath the surface of the skin.
- Later stages include the following: difficulty in breathing; abnormal heart rhythms; kidney failure; liver malfunction; nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, diarrhea; encephalitis (swelling of the brain) resulting to brain injury; and blood in stools.

DO:

- Seek medical assistance immediately.
- Use tweezers to remove the tick without squashing the head and the body.
- Antibiotics are usually used to cure RMSF. If untreated, RMSF is fatal.

DON'T:

- Don't delay seeking medical help.