

Eczema

Eczema can quite often occur in babies up to about 4 months of age. It is usually milder than the type that occurs in adults. Your baby's cheeks become rough and scaly and this can also occur in your child's eyebrows and hair (cradle cap).

If infection sets in, the skin can become scaly, develop cracks and redness and weep.

Caused by overactivity of the sweat glands. This is usually grown out of in the first 6 months. You should stop using soap in his bath, ask your pharmacist about alternatives.

If the rash is particularly bad, you should limit the bathing to 2 times per week. Do not use baby creams and lotions.

Moisturise the skin with sorbolene cream. Your doctor may prescribe a very mild steroid cream which you can add to the sorbolene cream and apply to your baby's skin. This is perfectly safe and will usually sooth the pain. A natural option is chamomile applied on babies head - do not use on children under 2 weeks old and always use one drop diluted in carrier oil.

Cradle cap

Is a type of eczema, a build up of natural oils. This causes a dry scaly crust on your baby's head. Petroleum jelly (vaseline) can help soften the scales and allow their removal.

Oral thrush

Baby's immune system have not fully developed and can not often withstand infection of the candida albicans fungus. It most often occurs in their mouth. It will look like white milk curds stuck to the inside of the mouth. They will not be removed or scraped off however.

Thrush can be painful but more than likely your child will tolerate it. Your will need to speak to your doctor or pharmacist about specific products which will remove the thrush.

Also treat your nipples if breastfeeding as it can spread to you. You must also sterilise all feeding equipment and anything else your baby puts in his or her mouth. Change your sterilisation equipment you use for your feeding equipment often when your child has thrush.

Reflux

This can happen often in new babies. It occurs when your child vomits up most of the food swallowed. It is caused by a poorly formed valve between the gullet and the stomach. The valve usually rights itself as the child becomes older.

This can be a worrying time for parents as they worry if their child is putting on enough weight. The problem with reflux occurs when the vomiting becomes very regular and annoying, your baby does not put on weight. Usually the child will grow out of this problem in the first few months.

A few helpful hints are to adjust the baby's resting position. Put the cot up at the head end about 30 degrees.

Bowel motions of a newborn

For breastfed children...

Your baby may have many motions per day or only one every few days. The motion may be yellow, green, brown or a combination of these. The consistency may be pasty, fluid or seedy. It will not normally be hard in texture.

If your child is passing hard stools, this is not normal. Another thing to look out for is overly fluid stools that resemble urine. See your doctor if this happens.

For bottle-fed children...

Bottle-fed babies will usually have more firmer stools and pass them more frequently - four times per day to once every couple of days. The colour of the stool will be more red-brown and green. They may become constipated or just simply pass harder stools.

If your child is passing watery stools - check with your doctor and take a sample of the stool with you.