

Face and Diaper Rash

Skin on the face and diaper area is more sensitive than at other sites. The most common cause of rash on these areas is irritation. Skin irritation starts with excessive dryness or wetness. In the diaper area, irritation is made worse by prolonged exposure to soiled diapers or frequent use of complex products like diaper wipes or creams. On the face, acidic foods, wipes, creams and cleansers contribute to irritation. The best way to treat skin irritation is to:

1. Avoid contact with any potential skin irritant. These include: commercial wipes, powders, over-the-counter creams, ointments or harsh cleansers.
2. Change the diaper frequently. Use a super absorbent disposable diaper. Avoid scented diapers, or those with lots of elastic or dye. Some safer brands include: Seventh Generation, White Cloud, Tender Care and Tushies. Check the internet for places to buy these brands.
3. For cleansing, use only a warm water-dampened skin soft cloth, or plain mineral oil on cotton squares. During baths, use Cetaphil Gentle Cleansing Lotion, Vanicream Bar or Aveeno Eczema Care Cleanser.
4. Gently pat the skin dry. Do not rub.
5. Apply a thin coat of the prescribed ointment to the red areas as directed.
6. Use preservative-free 20-25% zinc oxide ointment to protect the skin. This product is generic and inexpensive, but can be hard-to-find. To identify the right product, carefully read the back label. The active ingredient should contain only 20-40% zinc oxide. The inactive ingredients should include only: paraffin, petrolatum and/or mineral oil.
7. Apply a thick coat of the zinc oxide ointment as often as possible - to the diaper area with every change; to the face before meals and at bedtime.
8. Continue this regimen for at least one week after the rash is gone.

If the problem persists for more than 2 weeks, plan to return for reevaluation.