

# RASHES



## ■ ■ ■ Description

Rashes are caused by various problems, some of which can be prevented or treated. Common causes include moisture, friction, heat, cold, light, and infections. Many of these conditions can be prevented by keeping skin dry, clean, and protected.

Rashes due to moisture include pitted keratolysis, jock itch, athlete's foot, and folliculitis. The moisture of sweat allows proliferation of certain skin organisms that result in these infections. Friction, on the other hand, can cause chafing, with resultant painful irritated skin. One example is that of jogger's nipples, which result from the irritation of the uniform or jersey over the nipples during prolonged runs. The result of friction on weight-bearing areas is blistering, such as on the soles of the feet and palms of the hands.

Infections commonly seen in sports are herpes, ringworm, and impetigo, all of which are easily spread in contact sports such as wrestling.

The external environments, whether they be sun or cold, can result in dry skin, sunburn, frostbite, and oral herpes.

## ■ ■ ■ Common Signs and Symptoms

- Reddening of skin that may be localized, clumped, or diffuse
- Itching, burning, or pain in the areas with rash
- Bleeding

## ■ ■ ■ Causes

- Infection
- Moisture
- Friction
- Sun
- Wind
- Cold

## ■ ■ ■ Risk Increases With

- Prolonged moisture, as in remaining in wet sweaty clothes
- Not using absorbent material in socks and other clothing
- Rough areas such as sleeve seams, causing irritation
- Poorly fitting shoes (increased risk of blisters)
- Skin-to-skin contact with infected competitors

## ■ ■ ■ Preventive Measures

- Change wet clothes immediately.
- Use materials that wick away moisture.
- Petroleum jelly can help prevent chafing and friction.
- Well-fitting shoes can prevent blistering.
- Tape or adhesives can be used to cover nipples and prevent irritation.
- Disallow participation when active herpes lesions are present.
- If you get sun-related fever blisters, use sunscreen and sunscreen containing lip balm when exercising in the sun.

## ■ ■ ■ General Treatment Considerations

For moisture-related problems, benzoyl peroxide can help dry areas, and aluminum chloride-containing antiperspirants can also be sprayed on sweaty feet. Recurrent and persistent fungal infections, such as jock itch and athlete's foot, can be treated with antifungal medication. Folliculitis requires antibiotic creams or oral medication on some occasions.

For conditions resulting from rubbing and chafing, treatment includes zinc oxide as a barrier and avoiding further friction by keeping the area protected. Avoidance of infection of these areas is usually accomplished by keeping the irritated area clean and dry.

Herpes infections can be treated with oral antiviral medications when outbreaks first occur. To obtain these medications, a prescription is needed, so you should consult your physician.

Many skin conditions may be misinterpreted as certain diseases or infections, so it is not unreasonable to seek medical attention to clarify the possibilities and maximize treatment. Some skin conditions are chronic and need long-term medication, and other skin conditions may point toward specific systemic illnesses.

Notes:

(Up to 4400 characters only)

Notes and suggestions