

Rash

Rashes are common in children. Many rashes do not need urgent attention, especially if the child is happy and the rash does not appear to bother them.

Urgent medical attention is needed if a child has a rash of flat spots that do not whiten if you press on them. The spots can be very small or quite large, and are coloured red or purple. These rashes are caused by burst blood vessels under the skin. They may indicate a serious infection such as meningococcal disease.

Some rashes are a sign of a severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis). The parents or carers of children with severe, life-threatening allergies should give the service a copy of the child's anaphylaxis action plan. Staff should follow this plan if the child has an anaphylactic reaction.

How it spreads

Spread depends on the cause of the rash. Most rashes are not infectious.

Exclusion period

Exclude if rash develops rapidly or it is combined with fever or other concerning symptoms. Otherwise do not exclude.

Actions for educators and other staff

Follow the exclusion period in the *Staying healthy* guidelines.

Ensure staff and children have good hand and respiratory hygiene.

Ensure staff use appropriate cleaning practices, as described in the *Staying healthy* guidelines.

Actions for parents and carers

If your child has a rash and is sick, take them to the doctor to find out what is causing the rash.

Keep your child at home until they feel well, especially if the rash is infectious.

Teach your child to cough or sneeze into a tissue, then throw the tissue into a bin and wash their hands. If there are no tissues nearby, teach them to cough or sneeze into their inner elbow instead of their hands.

Make sure your child washes their hands thoroughly and often if they have an infectious rash.

More information about rash

See Pregnancy, Birth and Baby for more information on prevention, diagnosis and treatment of serious rashes in children (pregnancybirthbaby.org.au/serious-childhood-rashes).

To find out if a child needs medical help:

- use the online symptom checker (healthdirect.gov.au/symptom-checker)
- speak to a registered nurse by calling the 24-hour health advice hotline on 1800 022 222.