Intertrigo

Intertrigo is a skin condition of skin folds. It is started or aggravated by heat, moisture, friction, and lack of air circulation. It develops from mechanical factors and secondary infection. Heat and rubbing together of skin surfaces are central to the process. In both adults and infants, the condition may be aggravated by:

- Sweat.
- Feces.
- Urine.
- Vaginal discharge.

It is made worse by yeast or bacteria that are present near skin folds.

The most common sites include:

- Groin.
- Breasts.
- Armpits.
- Folds of abdominal skin.
- Web spaces between the fingers or toes.

Intertrigo causes red, irritated patches. Sometimes they have scaling or drainage. Diabetes, obesity, and recent antibiotic treatment increase the risk for this condition.

HOME CARE

It is important to correct the factors that cause the condition:

- Take steps to avoid friction, heat. Do this by keeping folds cool and dry.
- If possible, use air conditioning and absorbent powders. Expose skin folds to the air.

Your caregiver may ask you to use anti-fungus creams (miconazole, clotrimazole). These may also contain mild steroids.

Skin surfaces in deep folds can be kept separated with cotton or linen cloth. But be sure to avoid tight, or chafing clothing or dressings.

Traditional remedies have been recommended for many years. **Although not harmful, there is no proof that they are helpful**. These include:

- Compresses with Burow solution 1:40, dilute vinegar, or wet tea bags often are effective, especially if followed by fanning or cool blow-drying.
- Castellani paint (carbol-fuchsin paint) also can be helpful.
- Formulations combining protective agents, antimicrobials, and topical steroids may possibly be helpful. A thick coat of these barrier creams should be applied. They include the following:
  - Triple Paste comprises petrolatum, zinc oxide paste, and aluminum acetate (Burow) solution applied qs ad (in a sufficient quantity).
  - "Greer's goo" is composed of nystatin (Mycostatin) powder 4 million U, hydrocortisone powder 1.2 g, and zinc oxide paste 4 oz applied in a sufficient quantity to cover the affected area.
  - Commercially available barrier pastes sold for diaper dermatitis (eg, Desitin) can be helpful, as can absorbent diapers.

Open-toed shoes or sandals may help reduce toe web-space moisture.

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

- The rash is not improving after one week of treatment.
- The condition worsens.

MAKE SURE YOU:

- Understand these instructions.
- Will watch your condition.
- Will get help right away if you are not doing well or get worse.

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