Balanitis, Infant

Balanitis is either an irritation or infection of the head of the penis. Sometimes both occur together.

CAUSES

Irritation may be caused by contact with urine or cleaning products used in the diaper or diaper area. Sometimes a mixture of things causes the irritation. Infection is due to bacteria or yeast germs normally found in the diaper area. There is often a diaper rash with balanitis.

SYMPTOMS

Your child has redness and swelling of the tip of his penis. He may also have:

- Redness and swelling of the shaft of the penis.
- Redness and swelling of the foreskin in babies who are not circumcised.
- A rash in the diaper area.
- Pain when he urinates or when you clean the diaper area.

DIAGNOSIS

Diagnosis of balanitis is done with physical exam. If there is an infection, a culture may be done to test for the type of germ causing the infection.

HOME TREATMENT

Keep the area clean and dry. Change the diapers often. Leave the diaper open to air.

- Do not use diaper wipes until this problem goes away. Use warm water instead.
- Avoid rubbing the red areas. Dry gently by blotting with a dry cloth.
- If you use cloth diapers, use a mild detergent and no bleach until the problem is better. It may be best to switch to throw-away diapers until this clears up.
- Use mild soap with no perfume for your baby's bath.
- Ointments for irritation may be used. Special ointments or creams will treat a yeast infection. Antibiotic ointments and sometimes antibiotics taken by mouth are used for bacterial infections.

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

- The redness and swelling are not better in 2 to 3 days.
- The problem comes back after improving.
- The redness and swelling are worse even with treatment.
- Your baby has a rectal temperature of 100.5º F (38.1° C) or higher lasting more than a day **AND** your baby is over age 3 months.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- **Your baby is 3 months old or younger with a rectal temperature of 100.4º F (38º C) or higher.**
- Your baby is older than 3 months with a rectal temperature of 102º F (38.9º C) or higher.
- Pus is coming from the tip of the penis.
- Your baby can not urinate.

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