# Perianal Dermatitis

Dermatitis is an inflammation of the skin. Dermatitis that occurs around the anal opening is called perianal dermatitis. Perianal dermatitis usually occurs in children. It is more common in boys than girls. This problem mainly occurs in children around 6 months to 10 years of age.

## CAUSES

Perianal dermatitis is caused by a bacterial infection. Streptococci (a type of bacteria) are the most common cause of this infection. These bacteria (also called *germs*) can be found in the throat where they can cause an infection called "strep throat." These germs can also be found on the surface of the skin. These bacteria invade the deeper parts of the skin around the anus through small cracks on the skin, causing an infection. Family or friends with strep throat or a skin infection can spread the germs to others. It can also spread from the child's own strep throat or other skin infection.

## SYMPTOMS

The skin around the anus of your child will be bright red in color. This redness may spread to the genitals. Other common symptoms will include:

- Pain when passing stools.
- Blood in the stool.
- Itching around the anus.
- Tenderness (pain on touch) around the anus.
- Cracks in the skin around the anus.
- Holding back stools to avoid pain.

## DIAGNOSIS

The diagnosis is made by getting a swab from the inflamed skin to test for bacteria by a culture or rapid strep test.

## TREATMENT

The caregiver will treat your child with antibiotics given by mouth or injection. Sometimes, antibiotics may also be directly applied to the skin (used topically). Improvement is usually rapid. If antibiotics are given by mouth, it is important to finish the full treatment.

## HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

This infection can come back. It also can spread to other family members or friends. Hence, it is important to observe your child for signs that the problem is coming back.

## SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

- Symptoms are not better after 2-3 days of treatment.
- Symptoms are worse.
- You feel that there are any problems from the medicines prescribed.

## SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

Your child is on treatment and:

- Temperature is over 100º F or 37.8º C (by mouth or ear) or 100.5º F or 38.6º C (rectally.)
- Is irritable, unusually sleepy or has a poor appetite.
- Complains of headache.
- Develops nausea, vomiting, and/or belly (*abdominal*) pain.

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