Diaper Yeast Infection

A yeast infection is a common cause of diaper rash.

CAUSES

Yeast infections are caused by a germ called *candida albicans*. These germs are normally found on the skin and in the mouth and intestine.

The yeast germs stay in balance with other germs (*bacteria*) normally found on the skin. A rash can occur if the yeast germ population gets out of balance. This can happen if:

- A common diaper rash causes injury to the skin.
- The baby or nursing mother is on antibiotics (which kill bacteria, upsetting the balance on the skin allowing the yeast to overgrow).

The infection can happen in more than one place. Yeast infection of the mouth (*thrush*) can happen at the same time as the infection in the diaper area.

SYMPTOMS

The skin may show:

- Redness.
- Small red patches or bumps around a larger area of red skin.
- Tenderness to cleaning.
- Itching.
- Scaling.

DIAGNOSIS

The infection is usually diagnosed based on how the rash looks. Sometimes, the child's caregiver may take a sample of skin scraping to confirm the diagnosis.

TREATMENT

- This rash is treated with a cream or ointment that kill yeast germs. Some are available over the counter. Some are available only by prescription only. Commonly used medicines are:
  - Clotrimazole.
  - Nystatin.
  - Miconazole.
- If there is yeast infection of the mouth (*thrush*), medicine by mouth may also be prescribed. Do not use skin cream or lotions in the mouth

HOMECARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Keep the diaper area clean and dry.
- Change the diapers as soon as possible after urine or bowel movements.
- Use warm water on a soft cloth to clean urine. Use a mild soap and water to clean bowel movements.
- Use a soft towel to pat dry the diaper area. Do not rub.
- Avoid baby wipes. If you must them, use those without scent or alcohol.
- Even though this rash is not contagious, it is a good idea to wash your hands after changing diapers.
- Keep the front of the diapers off whenever possible to allow drying of the skin.
- To prevent future yeast rash, keep the diaper area clean and dry as outlined above.
- Do not use soap and other harsh chemicals extensively around the diaper area.
- Do not use scented baby wipes or those which contain alcohol.
- After cleansing apply prescribed creams or ointments sparingly. Over the prescription apply Aquaphor

ointment or Vitaman A&D ointment liberally. This will protect the rash area from further irritation from urine or bowel movement.

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

- The rash does not get better after a few days of treatment.
- The rash is spreading despite treatment.
- Rash is present on the skin away from the diaper area.
- White patches appear in the mouth.
- Oozing or crusting of the skin.

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