Pityriasis Rosea

Pityriasis rosea is a rash which is probably caused by a virus. It generally starts as a scaly, red patch on the trunk (area a t-shirt would cover) but does not appear on sun exposed areas. The rash is usually preceded by an initial larger spot called the “Herald Patch” a week or more before the rest of the rash appears. Generally within one to two days the rash appears rapidly on the trunk, upper arms, and sometimes the upper legs. The rash usually appears as flat, oval patches of scaly pink to salmon-color. The rash can also be raised and one is able to feel it with their finger. The rash can also be finely crinkled and may slough off leaving a ring of scale around the spot. Sometimes a mild sore throat is present with the rash. It usually affects children and young adults in the spring and autumn. Women are more frequently affected than men.

TREATMENT

Pityriasis rosea is a self-limited condition. This means it goes away within 4 to 8 weeks without treatment. The spots may persist for several months especially in darker-colored skin after the rash has resolved and healed. Benadryl and steroid creams may be used if itching is a problem.

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

- Your rash does not go away or persists longer than three months.
- You develop fever and joint pain.
- You develop severe headache and confusion.
- You develop breathing difficulty, vomiting and/or extreme weakness.

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