Neonatal Acne

Neonatal acne is a very common rash seen in the first few months of life. Neonatal acne is also known as:

- Acne neonatorum.
- Baby acne.

It is a common rash that affects about 20 percent of babies. It usually shows up in the first 2-4 weeks of life. It can last up to 6 months. Neonatal acne is a temporary problem that goes away in a few months. Neonatal acne gets better without leaving scars.

CAUSES

The exact cause of neonatal acne is not known. It seems to be due to hormonal stimulation of skin glands. These skin glands are known as *sebaceous glands* (glands of the skin that secrete an oily substance called sebum). The hormones may be from the baby or from the mother. The mother's hormones enter the baby's body through the placenta during pregnancy. They can remain in the baby's body for sometime after birth. It may also be that the baby's sebaceous glands are overly sensitive to hormones.

SYMPTOMS

Neonatal acne is seen on the face especially on the:

- Forehead.
- Nose.
- Cheeks.

It may also appear on the neck and the upper part of the back. It may look like any of the following:

- Raised red bumps.
- Small bumps filled with pus.
- Whiteheads or blackheads.

DIAGNOSIS

The diagnosis is made by an exam of the skin.

TREATMENT

There is usually no need for treatment. The rash most often gets better by itself. Your baby's health care provider may prescribe a cream or lotion for bad cases. Sometimes a skin infection due to bacteria or fungus can start in the areas where the acne is found. In that case, your baby may be prescribed antibiotics or medicine to take by mouth.

HOMECARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Clean your baby's skin gently with mild soap and clean water.
- Keep the areas with acne clean and dry.
- Avoid using baby oils, lotions, and ointments unless prescribed. These may make the acne worse.

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

- Your child's acne gets worse.

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