



MID-JERSEY PEDIATRICS

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CRADLE CAP (SEBORRHEA)

Definition

Cradle cap or seborrheic dermatitis is a scaly, greasy and crusty rash that occurs primarily in areas with a high concentration of oil-producing glands. In infants this is most often seen as yellow-brown, greasy scales on the scalp. It also causes a red rash on the face, behind the ears, in the diaper area, and in the skin folds. It is a very common condition that usually begins in the first few weeks of life and slowly disappears over a period of 4 to 6 months. The scaling or rash, while unsightly, does not bother the baby since it is not itchy or uncomfortable, and it leaves no permanent changes on the skin.

Treatment of Cradle Cap

Shampoo the hair daily with mild baby shampoo and use a soft brush or fine-tooth comb to remove the scales. Oils may help to remove the thick scales. Mineral oil may be tried, but should be used in small amounts. If you do use oils, rub it on the scales, leave it on overnight and then comb it out and shampoo again in the morning. Your doctor may recommend a stronger medicated shampoo such as Sebulex, or Selsun Blue.

Treatment of Seborrheic Dermatitis

White, greasy scales in the skin folds may be removed with a cotton swab soaked in mineral oil. The reddened areas may then have 1% hydrocortisone cream applied once or twice daily, until clear. Facial rash may also be treated with 1% hydrocortisone cream, however the rash is likely to recur when treatment is discontinued.