



# Localized Rash

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## Definition

- Rash on one small part of the body (localized or clustered)
- Red or pink rash
- Small spots, large spots or solid red

## Causes

- Main cause: skin contact with some irritant.

## Care Advice

1. Reassurance: New localized rashes are usually due to skin contact with an irritating substance.
2. Avoid the Cause:
  - Try to find the cause.
  - Consider irritants like a plant (e.g., poison ivy), chemicals (e.g., solvents or insecticides), fiberglass, detergents, a new cosmetic, or new jewelry (e.g., nickel).
  - A pet may be the intermediary (e.g., with poison ivy or oak) or your child may react directly to pet saliva.
3. Avoid Soap: Wash the area once thoroughly with soap to remove any remaining irritants. Thereafter avoid soaps to this area. Cleanse the area when needed with warm water.
4. Local Cold: Apply a cold wet washcloth or soak in cold water for 20 minutes every 3 to 4 hours to reduce itching or pain.
5. Steroid Cream: If the itch is more than mild, apply 1% hydrocortisone cream (no prescription needed) 4 times per day. (EXCEPTION: suspected ringworm)
6. Avoid Scratching: Encourage your child not to scratch. Cut the fingernails short.
7. Contagiousness: Children with localized rashes do not need to miss any child care or school.
8. Expected Course: Most of these rashes pass in 2 to 3 days.

## When To Call

*Call 911 Now (your child may need an ambulance) If*

- Not moving or too weak to stand

*Call Your Doctor Now (night or day) If*

- Your child looks or acts very sick
- Purple or blood-colored spots or dots that's not from injury or friction
- Bright red area or red streak (but not sunburn)
- Rash area is very painful
- Age under 1 month old and tiny water blisters (like chickenpox)

*Call Your Doctor Within 24 Hours (between 9 am and 4 pm) If*

- You think your child needs to be seen
- Severe itching or fever is present
- Looks like a boil, infected sore or other infected rash
- Teenager with genital area rash
- Lyme disease suspected (bull's eye rash, tick bite or exposure)

*Call Your Doctor During Weekday Office Hours If*

- You have other questions or concerns
- Blisters unexplained (EXCEPTION: Poison Ivy)
- Pimples (Apply antibiotic ointment until seen)
- Peeling fingers
- Rash lasts longer than 7 days

*Adapted from The American Academy of Pediatrics (2011) at [www.healthychildren.org](http://www.healthychildren.org)*