

# Skin conditions in pregnancy

## What is it?

During pregnancy, your skin may change. It may become dry, red, itchy, darker, or more sensitive than before you were pregnant. These changes are usually not serious and will go away after your baby is born. It is usually because of changes to your hormone levels and extra blood flow.

Common skin conditions during pregnancy can be:

- **Hormone-related:** Your hormones will change during pregnancy. This can lead to stretch marks, darkening of the skin, extra hair growth and changes to how your nails look.
- **Pre-existing:** Skin conditions like atopic dermatitis, acne and psoriasis may change during pregnancy.
- **Pregnancy-specific:** Sometimes during pregnancy you can develop a health or skin condition you've not had before. Symptoms can include rash and itch, redness, bumps and blisters. Usually, these symptoms are not bad. Sometimes they can mean you have a more severe health condition. If you have any of these symptoms you should talk to your GP.

Usually, skin conditions can be managed with creams or lotions. If you have any other new symptoms you should see your GP.

## What will my GP do now?

Your GP will talk to you about your health and your symptoms. They may ask you to have a blood test or a skin biopsy. Your GP may also refer you to a specialist called a dermatologist.

Your treatment will depend on the type of skin condition you have. Treatment options may include:

- Creams, lotions or ointments
- Oral medicines

Your GP will explain your health condition and the treatment options you have.

## What will my GP do in the future?

Your GP may want to see you again to check how your skin condition is going. Most skin conditions go away after birth. Sometimes, a skin condition may come back or cause other health problems. Monitor your symptoms and see your GP if you are worried about your skin.

## What can I do?

It is important you take good care of your skin during pregnancy. If you have a skin condition, follow the instructions from your GP to help treat it.

There are things you can do to be more comfortable, including:

- Avoid scratching the affected area
- Have a cool bath or shower to calm the skin
- Gently pat yourself with a towel after bathing, do not rub or use a towel to scratch yourself
- Avoid soaps, shower gels or foaming bath products
- Wear loose, cotton clothing - Cotton is breathable and will keep you cool
- Keep your nails short to avoid scratching the skin

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## What supports are available?



Visit the Health Resource Directory website to find the right supports and services for you.  
Scan the QR code to view the website.



## What questions could I ask my doctor?

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| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>What symptoms should I look out for?</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Can I do my normal activities?</i>   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>What treatment might I need?</i>         | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>How often will I need check-ups?</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Will my baby be affected?</i>            | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Will I have to stay in hospital?</i> |



## Where can I learn more?

- **Pregnancy, Birth and Baby** - Changes to your skin during pregnancy: [pregnancybirthandbaby.org.au](http://pregnancybirthandbaby.org.au)

This information is to be viewed by someone who has received a diagnosis from their doctor. It is not designed to be used to diagnose a condition or as a substitute for ongoing medical care

Health Resource Directory factsheets are endorsed by South Western Sydney PHN's Community Advisory Committee and local GPs

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