

What is it?

A rash is a change in colour and texture of the skin. They can feel hot, itchy, or painful. The rash may appear in one spot or around the body. They can last for days or weeks.

Rashes are common in children and babies. There are many kinds of rashes. They can be caused by viruses, allergies, sunburn, heat or medications.

Some rashes are harmless and go away on their own. Others may need treatment. It is important to find out the main cause of the rash so it can be treated. Rashes that turn white when you push on them are called blanching rashes. These are often not serious. Rashes that don't turn white when you push on them may be caused by an infection or health issue.

What will my GP do now?

Your GP may find the main cause of your child's rash, based on what it looks like and your child's symptoms, and give you a treatment plan for your child. If your child has other symptoms, your GP will also treat these. Treatment depends on the rash's cause.

If your GP suspects the rash is serious, you will be given an urgent assessment. If your GP believes your child has an infectious disease, your child may need to isolate (stay indoors away from other people) for a period of time.

Your GP may see you again in two weeks to check on your child's rash and overall health. If your child's rash doesn't go away, your GP may suggest your child sees a specialist.

Signs to look out for

If your child has a rash with small, bright red or purple spots or bruises that do not blanch, and a fever, headache, stiff neck or back pain, see your GP as soon as possible.

What can I do?

If your child has a rash, call your GP before going to the medical centre. They may want to see you in your car or in an isolated room. This is in case the child is infectious.

Many viral rashes get better on their own. Your GP may recommend specific skin care changes or products to help manage some rashes e.g nappy rash.

Rashes caused by allergies can take some time to treat as you need to find the trigger. If the rash is itchy, your GP may be able to suggest creams or treatments to help relieve the itch.

Keep an eye on your child's symptoms and contact your GP if they aren't getting better.

Where can I learn more?

- **The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne** – Rashes: rch.org.au
- **The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne** – Childhood rash symptoms and treatments: rch.org.au