

# Cradle Cap (Seborrheic Dermatitis)

**What is Cradle Cap?** Cradle Cap is dandruff in infants. It is caused by a buildup of a greasy material called sebum (see — bum). The sebum is secreted by certain glands in the scalp. This may make the scalp look flaky and sometimes have yellow scales. Sometimes it makes the scalp appear dry, although it is not.

Seborrheic Dermatitis on the scalp is called Cradle Cap, but the same rash can also be found on the face, eyebrows, ears, or on other places on the body.

## **Who gets Seborrheic Dermatitis?**

Seborrheic Dermatitis is a very common skin problem in infants. It usually starts shortly after birth and can continue up until the age of one. In unusual cases, it may continue up until 2 years of age.

It can also reappear later in life, especially during adolescence.

## **How is Seborrheic Dermatitis diagnosed?**

Your doctor will look for the flaky or greasy, yellow scales on the scalp. She may also look around the ears, on the face, in the eyebrows, and on other areas of the body.

It is also important for you doctor to know when the rash first started, if it is itchy, and if there is any family history of skin rashes.

There is no need to perform any tests or cultures.

## **How is it treated?**

Since Seborrheic Dermatitis is caused by an excess of oils, it is important to keep the scalp dry.

If there are thick scales in the hair, apply some baby oil, massage it into the scalp and let it sit. After 3 to 5 minutes, use a soft-bristled baby brush or a fine-toothed baby comb through the hair to gently lift scales up. Then wash the hair. Make sure to wash all the baby oil out of the hair — leaving it on the scalp can make the rash worse.

You should shampoo the baby's hair once a day or every other day. For mild cases any baby shampoo will do. For more severe cases a dandruff shampoo like Selsun Blue® or Head and Shoulders® may be needed. Be careful not to get these shampoos in the baby's eyes — it will sting.

A medicated cream may be used to control any itching and treat any inflammation.

**Use the medicine prescribed below as directed:**

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As always, please contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

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