

Rash

If your skin breaks out in bumps or patches you may have a rash. These patches can look red on white skin and grey on black or brown skin.

If the rash appeared quickly and you do not feel well, you may have an infection.

If you have a rash but feel well, it is probably an allergic reaction to something. The most common type of allergic reaction is urticaria (hives).

It can also mean your skin has come into contact with something that has caused a reaction.

Go to your GP or nearest emergency department if you have a rash and:

- a severe headache
- vomiting
- high temperature
- a stiff neck
- sensitivity to light

These are signs of meningitis.

[Meningitis and septicaemia in children and babies](#)

Types of rashes

These can include hives, heat rashes or long term skin conditions such as psoriasis.

Hives

A hives rash can come in patches in many shapes and sizes.



Hives are raised, itchy bumps on your skin that appear like a rash.

Many things can trigger hives. These include:

- nettles
- [insect bites and stings](#)
- medicines
- exercise or heat
- certain foods
- latex

[Check if you have hives](#)

Heat rash

A heat rash is uncomfortable, but usually harmless. It usually gets better on its own after a few days.

The symptoms of a heat rash are:

- small, raised spots
- an itchy, prickly feeling
- mild swelling

The rash often looks red, but this may be less obvious on brown or black skin. It can appear anywhere on the body.

It can appear anywhere on the body and spread, but it cannot be passed on to other people.



Heat rash appears as raised spots that are 2mm to 4mm across. Some spots may be filled with fluid.

Rashes in children

A rash on your child's skin can be caused by a number of things.

These include:

- [eczema](#)
- [psoriasis](#)
- [nappy rash](#)
- [slapped cheek syndrome](#)
- [impetigo](#)
- [chickenpox](#)

Photos of rashes

Check your or your child's rash against these common rashes.

[+ Rashes common in children](#)

[↓ Skin conditions with a rash](#)

[Rashes which last for more than 2](#)

- [weeks](#)

[Rashes caused by](#)

- [infections](#)

[Rashes caused by fungal](#)

- [infections](#)

[Rashes caused by](#)

- [bacteria](#)

Treatment for rashes

Antibiotics do not help most rashes.

Hives are usually treated with antihistamine tablets. Ask your pharmacist for advice. You can also take paracetamol or ibuprofen if you have any pain.

Put on an emollient and wash with a non-fragranced and soap-free cleanser.

[Treating itchy skin](#)

Go to your GP if:

- you have a rash and do not feel well

They can check if an infection is causing the problem. Some infections caused by viruses may need treatment.

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