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Dandruff, Cradle Cap, and Other Scalp Conditions

Also called: Seborrhea, Seborrheic Dermatitis

Your scalp is the skin on the top of your head. Unless you have hair loss [<https://medlineplus.gov/hairloss.html>] , hair grows on your scalp. Different skin problems [<https://medlineplus.gov/skinconditions.html>] can affect your scalp.

Dandruff is a flaking of the skin. The flakes are yellow or white. Dandruff may make your scalp feel itchy. It usually starts after puberty, and is more common in men. Dandruff is usually a symptom of seborrheic dermatitis, or seborrhea. It is a skin condition that can also cause redness and irritation of the skin.

Most of the time, using a dandruff shampoo can help control your dandruff. If that does not work, contact your health care provider.

There is a type of seborrheic dermatitis that babies can get. It is called cradle cap. It usually lasts a few months, and then goes away on its own. Besides the scalp, it can sometimes affect other parts of the body, such as the eyelids, armpits, groin, and ears. Normally, washing your baby's hair every day with a mild shampoo and gently rubbing their scalp with your fingers or a soft brush can help. For severe cases, your health care provider may give you a prescription shampoo or cream to use.

Other problems that can affect the scalp include:

- Scalp ringworm [<https://medlineplus.gov/tineainfections.html>] , a fungal infection that causes itchy, red patches on your head. It can also leave bald spots. It usually affects children.
- Scalp psoriasis [<https://medlineplus.gov/psoriasis.html>] , which causes itchy or sore patches of thick, red skin with silvery scales. About half of the people with psoriasis have it on their scalp.

Start Here

- Cradle Cap (Seborrheic Dermatitis) in Infants [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/cradle-cap.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/cradle-cap.html>]
- Dandruff [<https://skinsight.com/skin-conditions/dandruff/?lmiw9cApl=1>] (VisualDX)

Symptoms

- Dandruff: Symptoms and Causes [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/dandruff/symptoms-causes/syc-20353850?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/diseases-conditions/dandruff/symptoms-causes/syc-20353850?p=1>]
- Seborrheic Dermatitis: Signs and Symptoms [<https://www.aad.org/public/diseases/a-z/seborrheic-dermatitis-symptoms?NoAds>] (American Academy of Dermatology)

Treatments and Therapies

- Cradle Cap: Treatment [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/cradle-cap/diagnosis-treatment/drc-20350400?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/diseases-conditions/cradle-cap/diagnosis-treatment/drc-20350400?p=1>]

• Dandruff: Diagnosis and Treatment [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/dandruff/diagnosis-treatment/drc-20353854?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/diseases-conditions/dandruff/diagnosis-treatment/drc-20353854?p=1>]

- Tea Tree Oil [<https://www.nccih.nih.gov/health/tea-tree-oil>]  (National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health)

Specifics

- Cradle Cap [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/cradle-cap/symptoms-causes/syc-20350396?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
- Kerion [<https://skinsight.com/skin-conditions/kerion/?lmiw9cApl=1>] (VisualDX)
- Ringworm, Scalp (Tinea Capitis) [<https://skinsight.com/skin-conditions/tinea-capitis-ringworm-of-scalp/child/?lmiw9cApl=1>] (VisualDX)
- Scalp Psoriasis vs. Seborrheic Dermatitis: What's the Difference? [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/psoriasis/expert-answers/scalp-psoriasis/FAQ-20058544?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/diseases-conditions/psoriasis/expert-answers/scalp-psoriasis/faq-20058544?p=1>]
- Seborrheic Dermatitis [<https://skinsight.com/skin-conditions/seborrheic-dermatitis/?lmiw9cApl=1>] (VisualDX)
- Seborrheic Dermatitis and Rosacea [<https://www.rosacea.org/patients/seborrheic-dermatitis>] (National Rosacea Society)
- Seborrheic Dermatitis Overview [<https://www.aad.org/public/diseases/a-z/seborrheic-dermatitis-overview?NoAds>] (American Academy of Dermatology)

Clinical Trials

- ClinicalTrials.gov: Dermatitis, Seborrheic [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Dermatitis,+Seborrheic%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)

Journal Articles

References and abstracts from MEDLINE/PubMed (National Library of Medicine)

- Article: Classification of skin diseases with deep learning based approaches. [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40721845>]
- Article: Evaluation of clinical and lifestyle factors associated with disease severity in... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40579959>]
- Article: Novel compound heterozygous DOCK6 variants expand the mutational spectrum in prenatal... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40481473>]
- Dandruff, Cradle Cap, and Other Scalp Conditions -- see more articles [<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=%22Dandruff%22%5Bmajr%3Anoexp%5D+OR+%22Scalp+Dermatoses%22%5Bmajr%3Anoexp%5D+OR+%22Dermatitis%2C+Seborrheic%22%5Bmajr%3Anoexp%5D+AND+humans%5Bmh%5D+AND+english%5Bla%5D+AND+%22last+1+Year%22+%5Bdat%5D+NOT+%28letter%5Bpt%5D+OR+case+reports%5Bpt%5D+OR+editorial%5Bpt%5D+OR+comment%5Bpt%5D%29+AND+free+full+text%5Bsb%5D+>]

Children

- Pediatric Seborrheic Dermatitis [<https://skinsight.com/skin-conditions/seborrheic-dermatitis-pediatric/?lmiw9cApl=1>] (VisualDX)

Teenagers

- Dandruff (For Teens) [<https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/dandruff.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/teens/dandruff.html>]

Patient Handouts

- Cradle cap [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007582.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/007582.htm>]

- Ringworm of the scalp [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000878.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000878.htm>]
- Seborrheic dermatitis [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000963.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000963.htm>]



MEDICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA

- Cradle cap [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007582.htm>]
- Ringworm of the scalp [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000878.htm>]
- Seborrheic dermatitis [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000963.htm>]

Related Health Topics

- Common Infant and Newborn Problems [<https://medlineplus.gov/commoninfantandnewbornproblems.html>]
- Head Lice [<https://medlineplus.gov/headlice.html>]
- Psoriasis [<https://medlineplus.gov/psoriasis.html>]
- Skin Conditions [<https://medlineplus.gov/skinconditions.html>]
- Tinea Infections [<https://medlineplus.gov/tineainfections.html>]

National Institutes of Health

The primary NIH organization for research on *Dandruff, Cradle Cap, and Other Scalp Conditions* is the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases [<http://www.niams.nih.gov/>]

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