

Cradle Cap



Cardinal Pediatrics
304-599-8000

Cradle Cap / Seborrheic Dermatitis in your Infant

Cradle cap commonly occurs in babies and is due to overactive sebaceous glands. These glands can cause excess oil build-up which can cause skin problems which appear as slightly yellow crusts or greasy scales over areas of mild redness. This most commonly happens on the scalp and face, but sometimes it will progress to the neck, behind the ears, or in the underarm skin folds; less often, it will also appear on the torso or in the diaper area. When it occurs in areas apart from the head, we refer to this as Seborrheic Dermatitis.

Commonly Asked Questions

- When does it happen?
 - It typically shows up within the first 2-6 weeks after birth.
- Why does it happen?
 - It is thought to be related to hormonal changes occurring after delivery which cause the skin to create extra oil.
- Does it hurt or itch?
 - Great news! It should not be painful or particularly itchy to your infant. So if they seem bothered by the area of concern, please call us and we will discuss further!
- How can I help my baby's skin clear?
 - Most of the time you can care for your child's cradle cap or seborrhea at home with simple skin care measures:
 - Once daily, massage the area gently with a wet washcloth to loosen the scales, then Shampoo and wash the affected areas with an unscented baby shampoo or baby wash. While shampooing, utilize a baby brush to loosen the scales. Repeat this daily, as long as there is consistent improvement!
- I have heard about the use of coconut or mineral oil in treating cradle cap- is this okay?
 - Many parents do use mineral oil or coconut oil to help loosen the scales. When used with care, this can be an effective practice but be aware that this is not officially recommended by the AAP as with overuse it can cause further build-up of oil and scaling.
- What if these options don't work for my baby?
 - If the symptoms persist following these interventions, please contact us and we will be happy to discuss some addition treatment options such as proper use of a mild steroid or a Selenium Sulfide shampoo!



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Remember we are only a phone call away!