Diaper Rash Treatment

Self-Care at Home

Proper skin care is one of the most important treatments for diaper rash. The following techniques may help alleviate or shorten the duration of diaper rash.

- Diapers should be changed more often than normal.
- Skin should be washed with a very mild soap and air dried or lightly patted dry.
- The skin should be cleaned, but avoid any rough scrubbing, which could lead to further skin irritation. After cleaning, the skin should be exposed to air, leaving the diaper off for several hours if possible.
- Avoid using plastic pants during this time.
- Certain foods may seem to worsen the rash. If this is the case, avoid these foods until the rash has cleared.
- If the rash is caused by a contact or allergic dermatitis, stop using any new soaps or detergents that may be causing the rash.
- If the rash appears to be caused by a candidal infection, it may be treated with topical, over-the-counter antifungal creams.
- Topical steroids can be used for diaper rash caused by allergic, atopic, or seborrheic causes but should not be used for fungal infections.
- Zinc oxide may also be effective.

Medical Treatment

- If the child (or adult) appears to have a candidal infection, the doctor may recommend antifungal creams or medicines.
- If the child has impetigo (a bacterial infection), antibiotics may be prescribed.
- Your doctor may recommend a short course of mild topical steroid cream or ointment if the rash does not appear to be a fungal infection.