



RASHES

Fifth disease is a rash caused by a virus. It is very contagious. There is no vaccine to prevent fifth disease.

Fifth disease usually is not serious. For most children the only symptom is a light red rash on the cheeks and face. The rash can spread to the backs of the arms and legs or all over the body. The rash may fade some and then reappear, and may look worse when your child gets hot. The rash is usually gone in about five days, but it may reappear occasionally for several weeks.

This disease may cause your child to be uncomfortable and irritable. Be patient with your child. Lots of rest will help him feel better. If he seems very uncomfortable, or starts having other symptoms such as fever, call your doctor.

Adults can also get fifth disease. In adults, it may also cause flu-like symptoms, diarrhea, and joint pain.

Most skin rashes are not dangerous. Measles and chicken pox also cause rashes, and these diseases can be more serious than fifth disease. You can prevent these diseases by having your child immunized.

Rashes can be symptoms of a more serious disorder, such as Lyme disease or Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, which are diseases spread through tick bites. Allergic reactions can also cause rashes.

Check with your doctor if your child has an unexplained rash that does not go away.

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