

Skin Rashes: What Causes Them?

Description



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Pretty much all of us have had a rash at some point in our lives. Some of us may even get them regularly. Rashes are areas of irritated skin that can take many forms – they can be red, scaly, bumpy or blistered. They don’t look pleasant, and can often be itchy or painful.

Some rashes are easy to diagnose like diaper rash. Others can appear without us realising and may require a bit of detective work to diagnose. Below are just some of the common causes of rashes.

Allergies

Allergic reactions and sensitivity to certain substances are the most common reasons for rashes. Such rashes can take several forms.

Pure allergic reactions typically result in redness and small bumps called hives. Triggers for these rashes could include certain foods, medication, contact with animals or contact with certain materials like latex.

If your skin is dry and irritated, this is more likely to be a form of eczema known as contact dermatitis. Causes of these rashes can include cleaning chemicals, soaps, detergents, certain cosmetics or even certain metals like nickel.

Sites like [Asthma & Allergy Associates](#) can help you to explore treatment methods and prevention strategies. Once you know the trigger, you should reduce contact and look into hypoallergenic alternatives if they are an option.

Stress

Some rashes are the result of underlying conditions. These rashes may be brought out by allergic reactions to substances, but can also often be brought out by stress.

Types of rash conditions that are often triggered by stress include psoriasis, eczema, rosacea and stress-induced hives. Stress may also increase your chances of developing infection-based rashes like impetigo due to lowering the immune system.

Finding ways to destress can help reduce flare-ups of these types of rashes. There are many [stressbusting techniques](#) that you can try.

Bites/stings

Animals and plants can often cause rashes when they sting or bite. These may take the form of a large red bump, or an area of small bumps (hives).

Nettles, ants and mosquitoes are a few common culprits behind mystery rashes. Such rashes are often not a concern, but you should see a doctor if they grow or get more painful. This post at [MedicineNet](#) explains more as to when to worry about an insect bite.

Using insect repellent sprays may prevent bites. It's also advised that you cover up your arms and legs when exploring areas of long grass or boggy areas where bites and stings are more likely.

Sun exposure

Sun exposure can cause all kinds of different rashes. Sunburn (which is technically more of a burn than a rash) is the most obvious. [Heat rash and sun rash](#) are other types of rash that are more similar to an allergy.

Wearing sun lotion, keeping cool and not spending too much time in direct sunlight can stop you from getting these types of rashes. Some people are more susceptible than others due to their complexion or underlying skin conditions – if you are more likely to get rashes, you will need to be more careful in the sun.

Viruses/bacteria/fungus

Various infections caused by bacteria, fungus or viruses can lead to rashes. Examples include chickenpox, measles, shingles, cellulitis, impetigo, ringworm and athlete's foot are all examples.

These types of rashes tend to cause a greater level of pain and itchiness and are often accompanied by spots, blisters or bleeding. It is important to see a doctor for these types of rashes as they may require prescription medication to treat. Some can also be contagious, so it's important to cover them up.

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