

Diaper Rash 101

Meet the EXPERT



M&B' panellist **Sonali Shrivani** is an Internationally Certified Pregnancy Consultant and a child nutrition counsellor. She is the executive director of CAPP India, and also trains aspiring birth professionals to achieve certification in pregnancy, birth and lactation counselling.

Diaper rash is a term most mums dread. It causes redness, pain and hence irritability in the baby. You may think that replacing the diaper with a cloth nappy may help prevent the rashes. But this may not be true.

Diaper rash is not caused by disposable diapers. In our country, we call disposable diapers a diaper and the cloth version, a nappy. A rash is caused when urine or faeces is left in contact with your baby's skin for an extended period of time. So whichever option you choose, just make sure you change it often and keep checking. Using a disposable diaper does not mean that you are free from checking.

Whenever you do a diaper change, clean the area with warm water and pat dry. If using a disposable diaper, then apply a diaper rash cream which is available at the local chemist and then put on a fresh diaper. If using a cloth diaper,



avoid using a plastic cover. Wash all cloth diapers in warm water and do not use a disinfectant in the final rinses. That can also cause rashes. Also, leave baby's bottom exposed to air for a few minutes at every diaper change.

A rash could also mean a bacterial infection and you would need your paediatrician to prescribe a medicinal cream. However, to begin with, apply a

little coconut oil to the rash-affected area at every diaper change. Coconut oil can work wonders in two ways. First, it will act as a barrier and not allow the water to pass through and so fresh urine or faeces will not touch the affected area. Second, it is a cooling oil so it will help the area dry faster. Using cold pressed coconut oil can be the best bet. If the rash does not seem better in 24 hours, do get it checked by the doctor. **MB**