



August 2011

Information sheet

Community and Health Services Department

Roseola

What is Roseola?

Roseola is an infection caused by a two human herpesviruses, HHV-6 (Human Herpesvirus Six) and HHV-7. They are not the same herpes viruses that cause cold sores or genital herpes infections. The infection is most common in children six to 24 months of age. Roseola is rare in children younger than four months or older than four years. The incubation period (the period between exposure to an infection and the appearance of the first symptoms) is five to 15 days.

Symptoms of Roseola

- A high fever for two to five days. Sometimes the fever may be as high as 41°C or 106°F and may cause seizures or convulsions due to the sudden rise in body temperature.
- Respiratory or gastrointestinal signs may occur with a high fever
- Children may be fussy or irritable
- A sore throat with swollen glands on the neck may occur
- A pink, raised rash may appear first on the trunk and neck, and then may spread to the arms, legs, and face as the fever ends and as the child appears to be recovering. The rash is not itchy.
- Rash may fade within hours or last for up to one to two days

Rare complications include seizures due to high fever, meningitis and encephalitis. Older people may present with infectious mononucleosis with fever, swollen glands, a generalized rash and atypical lymphocytes.

How Roseola Spreads

Roseola spreads person to person through contact with respiratory secretions of an infected person. Roseola is not very infectious. Humans are the only known natural hosts.

Treating Roseola

There is no specific vaccine or treatment for roseola and most children with the disease are not seriously ill. A child with fever should be given plenty of fluids to drink. Acetaminophen or ibuprofen could be given to reduce their temperature.

For further information, please call:
York Region Health Connection 1-800-361-5653
TTY 1-866-252-9933 or visit www.york.ca

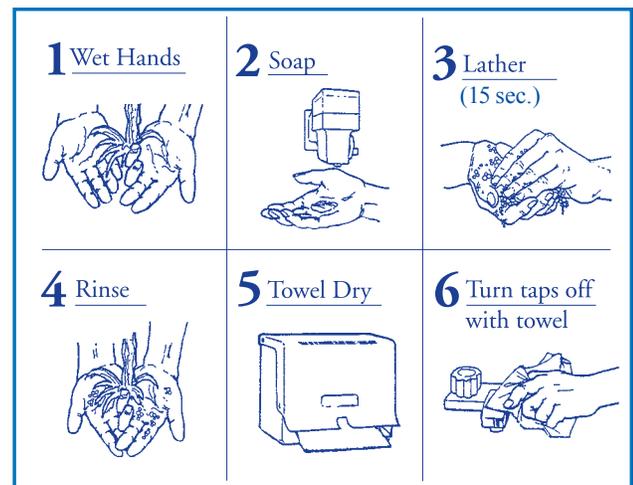
Treating Roseola at Home

Most children with roseola can be treated at home, including:

- Monitoring your child's condition. Children with immune system disorders may require hospitalization.
- Contacting the doctor if your child develops a fever. Take your child's temperature in the morning and the evening.
- Giving the child acetaminophen (e.g., Tylenol), if temperature goes above 39.4°C or 103°F. Do not give aspirin unless instructed by doctor.
- Applying a sponge or towel soaked in lukewarm water to keep your child cool if temperature is high. Do not use ice, cold water, alcohol rub, fans or cold baths.
- Encouraging your child to drink clear fluids. Fluids will help replace the body water and sweat lost in a fever.
- Letting your child rest in bed until the fever ends

Preventing Roseola

There is no vaccine to prevent roseola. The most effective method of preventing roseola is frequent hand washing.



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