

Neonatal Acne

Neonatal acne is a condition in newborn babies that leads to development of "pimples" resembling the acne experienced by teenagers. Characteristically one sees red bumps and irritated skin over the face, neck, and upper trunk. The baby will not be affected by the rash and there will be no fever or irritability related to the rash. Neonatal acne is caused by the passage of maternal hormones across the placenta during pregnancy.

When infants are born, these hormones persist for a short time, and the skin "thinks" it is entering puberty. The diagnosis is made on physical examination and no laboratory test are necessary. Neonatal acne does not leave scars. No treatment is necessary, and it will go away no matter what you do. One can speed up the resolution with some minor effort.

Washing the scalp with Johnson's Baby Shampoo and using the lather on the scalp as a reservoir with which to wash the face will help to dry it up. One can also use 1% hydrocortisone cream on the worst areas to combat some of the inflammation and redness.