

CRADLE CAP

What is cradle cap?

Cradle cap, also known as “seborrheic dermatitis”, is a very common problem in infants. It results in yellow coloured scales and sometimes red skin. It is most often seen on your baby’s scalp, but can affect other areas too (like the eyebrows).

What causes cradle cap?

The exact cause is not known, but may be related to excess oil secretion from the skin glands, and in some cases may be related to a very common yeast found on the skin.

Symptoms

It typically does not cause your baby pain or itchiness. Fortunately, most cases of cradle cap gradually resolve over time (which can take months).

Treatment

Most cases of cradle cap can be treated without medications. You can purchase oil (e.g., baby oil or mineral oil) without a prescription. You should massage the oil on your baby’s scalp to allow the scales to soften, leave in for at least an hour, and then gently comb out with a soft brush or fine comb. Wash out the oil with a gentle shampoo. Repeat this regularly until the yellow scales are gone.

In some cases, if the cradle cap is more extensive and has not improved on it’s own or with regular treatment using oil and gentle combing as described above, your doctor may prescribe a topical steroid cream. Some cases may be treated with an antifungal cream instead.