

CHILDHOOD RASHES

The information below aims to help parents/guardians tell different rashes apart. Click on name of illness below to go to nhs.uk website with more information about each illness and pictures of the rash.

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Illness	Common Features
<u>Measles</u>	Usually starts with cold-like symptoms, often with a high temperature above 38.0 and may have red, watery and crusty eyes, followed by a rash a few days later. Some people may also get small spots in their mouth. A few days later a rash appears. It usually starts on the face and behind the ears before spreading to the rest of the body. The spots are sometimes raised and join together to form blotchy patches, and not usually itchy. The rash looks brown or red on white skin. It may be harder to see on brown and black skin.
<u>Roseola</u>	Generally mild illness, often no symptoms but may be 3 to 5 days of fever, which can be followed by a rash with a mixture of flat discoloured areas of skin and small pinkish red spots, although most children have a viral illness with no rash. It may be harder to see the rash on brown or black skin. Unlike measles, the rash appears when the child is feeling better and the fever has passed.
<u>Scarlet fever</u>	Sore throat with pus/yellow patches, high fever. Usually no cough. About 12 to 48 hours later a pink or red rash with a mixture of flat discoloured areas and small raised bumps tends to start on the tummy, spreading to neck, back and limbs. On brown and black skin it might be harder to see a change in colour, but you can still feel the rash and see the raised bumps. A white coating of the tongue may be present ('strawberry tongue').
<u>Slapped cheek syndrome</u>	Also known as 'fifth disease'. Child has very red cheeks followed by a red rash which is more noticeable on arms and legs. The rash can be raised and itchy. It may be harder to see on brown and black skin. Before the rash appears the child may have cold-like symptoms with a fever or headache.
<u>Rubella (german measles)</u>	Usually mild and up to 50% of cases may have no symptoms. 1-5 days before a red or pink rash appears the child may be generally unwell and have cold-like symptoms and may have a fever. May have swollen glands behind the ears and neck. The spotty rash is usually mild, starts on the face and behind the ears and then spreads to other parts of the body. It can be harder to see on brown or black skin, but might feel rough or bumpy.
<u>Glandular fever</u>	More common in teenagers. Mainly starts with a sore throat and often feeling generally unwell with a fever. Glands (armpit, groin, neck, head or elbow) swell. About 1 in 10 people with the infection have a red blotchy rash, which may be harder to see on brown or black skin.

For pictures of rashes, including some not listed above see [rashes-babies-and-children](#)