



Rashes

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Foreword

The most common skin problems include rashes caused by ribavirin. Other skin problems are generally not as serious but can be very annoying. Do not self-diagnose, be sure to consult with a medical professional or a dermatologist (skin specialist) if the rash is worrisome, painful or itchy. It is even more important to see a specialist if there is any redness, swelling, accumulation of fluid or pus.

The symptoms of dry skin can be mild dry, flaky skin to severe skin irritation including bumps and blisters. The itching associated with a rash can be mildly annoying to extremely irritating.

Generally, rashes are not particularly dangerous except in rare instances where they spread over large areas of the body and become infected. Signs and symptoms of serious skin infection include:

- Pus, especially any pus that leaks from the skin
- Red streaks in the infected area
- General redness around the infected area
- Increased pain
- Generalized body swelling or swelling around the affected area
- Fever or chills

If you notice any of the above symptoms talk to your medical provider immediately.

To prevent the rash from becoming infected one of the best strategies is to not scratch the skin and to never use fingernails or sharp instruments to scratch with.

There are many steps one can take to help to alleviate some of the

HCSP FACT SHEET

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The information in this fact sheet is designed to help you understand and manage HCV and is not intended as medical advice. All persons with HCV should consult a medical practitioner for diagnosis and treatment of HCV.

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symptoms of dry skin, such as itching, and to help to prevent dry skin from becoming infected. Try some of these simple tips:

- Try rubbing, pressure or vibration instead of scratching
- Drink plenty of water or other clear fluids to keep your entire body hydrated
- Apply moisturizer immediately after a shower or bath – before drying off with a towel
- Apply moisturizer a least twice a day – common types of lotions include Vaseline Intensive Care Lotion, Aveeno Body Lotion or petroleum type lotion.
- Use only non-perfumed, mild bath and personal products
- Avoid hot showers and baths
- Take an oatmeal bath to relieve the itching and help with relaxation (try putting one cup of oatmeal in warm bath)
- Try baking soda or bath oils for bathing
- Apply cold packs (wrapped in a towel) to the skin
- Wear loose fitting clothes made from natural fabrics that breathe
- Protect your skin from the sun – wear sunscreen
- Protect your lips – use Chapstick with sunscreen
- Get plenty of rest
- Keep rooms ventilated and between 60 and 70 degrees
- If the itching or rash become severe seek medical help. Your medical provider needs to evaluate the rash and may be able to prescribe over-the-counter or prescription medication to treat the rash or help with the severe itching

Related publications:

- **A Guide to Hepatitis C: Treatment Side Effect Management**
www.hcvadvocate.org/hepatitis/factsheets_pdf/Treatment_Side_Effect_Guide.pdf
- **Pruritus (Itching)**
www.hcvadvocate.org/hepatitis/factsheets_pdf/pruritus.pdf
- **Side Effect Management: Rashes**
www.hcvadvocate.org/hepatitis/factsheets_pdf/SEM_Rashes.pdf

For more information

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Americans with Disabilities Act
 www.ada.gov • Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
 www.cdc.gov | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hepatitis C Support Project
 www.hcvadvocate.org • Mayo Clinic
 www.mayoclinic.com |
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