



## **DR IAN HAY LTD** **CONSULTING PAEDIATRICIANS**

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### **PATIENT INFORMATION SHEET: HEAT RASHES**

Babies often develop rashes of different appearances, most of which are of no consequence especially if they are otherwise well with no accompanying fever.

If your baby has a rash you should apply the *glass test* (pressure of a glass on the rash) and this should cause the rash to disappear or “blanch”. If it does, it is likely that the rash is due to a viral infection (non-specific or specific like measles or rubella), an allergic reaction or a reaction to heat.

Overdressing your child, too tight clothing or a fever can cause a heat rash, also known as Miliaria, caused by blockage of the sweat gland ducts to the skin. There are 2 main types, miliaria rubra where small bumps appear with a red halo around each. This can cause stinging or an itch – hence the term *prickly heat*. These are usually seen in the skin folds eg on the neck, armpits or groin where sweating is maximal. It is also seen around the area on the scalp when a hat is worn.

Newborn babies, especially, may show the second type – miliaria crystallina, in which small clear bubble-like bumps appear on the skin. They are colourless and have no red rim/halo.

#### **TREATMENT OF HEAT RASHES**

Removing of clothing and decreasing the environmental temperature usually improves the rash and the addition of Paracetamol (Calpol) if your child is feverish may help.

Cool baths or cold compresses can relieve itching as can Calamine lotion.

If the rash doesn't settle or your child remains feverish or the rash becomes more widespread, you should seek advice.

**Dr Raymond Brown**