

Roseola

This leaflet offers more information about Roseola. If you have any further questions or concerns, please speak to the staff member in charge of your child's care.

What is Roseola?

Roseola, also known as sixth disease, is a viral illness that is fairly common in young children. Roseola is often seen in children between the ages of three months and three years and is particularly common in those between six months and two years old. It is caused by a virus called Human Herpesvirus Type 6 or Human Herpesvirus Type 7. It is generally a very mild disease that doesn't cause any long term problems.

What are the signs and symptoms?

Often the first sign of Roseola is a high temperature that starts suddenly. Your child may look flushed and be hot to touch. They may be upset and irritable with the fever, which can go as high as 40 degrees Celsius.

The fever usually lasts about three to four days and is then often followed by the characteristic rash that helps us to diagnose Roseola.

The rash normally starts on the body and spreads to the arms and legs. It is less commonly seen on the face. A Roseola rash is made up of small pinkish red spots and bumps which are not itchy or painful. The rash lasts a couple of days before disappearing again.

Children with Roseola may also complain of a sore throat and have swollen glands in the neck and swollen eyelids. They may lose their appetite and have symptoms of a cold (cough and runny nose).

Does my child need any tests to confirm the diagnosis?

Roseola is a condition that can be diagnosed by the characteristic rash seen. There are no specific tests necessary to diagnose this illness.

Sometimes, children will have tests performed before the rash has appeared. This is to exclude other causes of the high fever not to diagnose Roseola itself.

What treatments are available?

There are no treatments needed for Roseola. The suggestions below are to help keep your child as comfortable as possible until the illness goes away.

- Encourage your child to drink plenty while they are unwell. This will help prevent them becoming dehydrated. Ice lollies are a good way of giving your child fluid if they are reluctant to drink.

- Give them paracetamol (Calpol) or ibuprofen (Nurofen) if they have a high fever and are distressed. Always follow the dosing guidelines on the manufacturer's bottle.
- Children with a fever do not need to be under or overdressed. If your child is shivering, this is because of the fever and is the body's way of trying to cool down. Wrapping them in lots of layers and blankets will not help.
- Keep your child in a well-ventilated room and avoid overheating the room. Do not sponge your child with cool water; this will not help the fever come down.

How do I limit spread to other children?

Roseola is spread very easily and children with Roseola are thought to be most infective during the stage of illness when they have a high fever. Once the fever has gone away, they can go back to nursery and mix with other children as before.

The time from being in contact with Roseola, to showing symptoms can vary between nine to fifteen days.

When to seek help

Most children will recover of their own accord without needing to see a doctor. You should ask for your child to be reviewed by a doctor if they:

- have a fever lasting more than five days
- are very lethargic and irritable
- are not managing to drink enough fluid
- are less than three months and have a fever above 38 degrees Celsius
- have a rash that doesn't disappear with pressure.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Emergency Department on 020 8725 2666 and ask to be put through to the Paediatric Emergency Department.

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit www.stgeorges.nhs.uk

Additional services

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS can offer you on-the-spot advice and information when you have comments or concerns about our services or the care you have received. You can visit the PALS office between 9.30am and 4.30pm, Monday to Friday in the main corridor between Grosvenor and Lanesborough wings (near the lift foyer).

Tel: 020 8725 2453 **Email:** pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk

NHS Choices

NHS Choices provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make decisions about your health.

Web: www.nhs.uk

NHS 111

You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

Tel: 111

AccessAble

You can download accessibility guides for all of our services by searching 'St George's Hospital' on the AccessAble website (www.accessable.co.uk). The guides are designed to ensure everyone – including those with accessibility needs – can access our hospital and community sites with confidence.



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