

# Facts about Roseola

**Roseola is a common infection in children ages 6 to 24 months. Roseola is caused by a virus.** Children younger than 4 months or older than 4 years don't usually get roseola. Most children are not very sick with roseola.

Roseola starts with a fever. After 3 to 5 days, the fever goes down and a rash appears on the child's face or body. The rash is made up of small, red dots that last for a day or two.

There can be a high fever that causes febrile (fever) seizures or convulsions in some children.

It is hard to know if a child has roseola until the rash appears. A doctor can tell if the child's fever is caused by roseola or some more serious infection.

## How is Roseola Spread?

**Roseola is not very infectious.** We are not sure how it spreads from person to person. Children with roseola get better without treatment and usually have no further problems.

Acetaminophen (Tylenol™, Tempra™) or ibuprofen (Advil™, Motrin™) may help reduce a fever and provide some comfort. Always follow the directions on the package about how much and how often to take acetaminophen or ibuprofen.

**Never give products containing ASA (acetylsalicylic acid, such as Aspirin™) to anyone under the age of 20 years.** Use of ASA products by children can lead to Reye's syndrome, a serious condition affecting the brain and liver.

## What to Do at Home

- If another child has roseola, watch your child for signs of roseola.
  - **Call your doctor** if your child has a temperature of 38.5 °C or higher or a febrile (fever) seizure.
  - To bring a child's fever down, keep clothing light, such as a T-shirt and shorts or diaper.
  - If your child has a temperature of 38.5 °C or higher, sponge baths with a washcloth soaked in cool, not cold, water can help reduce the fever.
  - Offer your child plenty of fluids to drink.
- For more information about how to look after a child with a fever, see "Facts About Fever" on page 24.
- When taking care of a child with roseola, wash your hands often and always before preparing and eating food.
  - Tell caregivers that your child has roseola.



**Children with roseola may return to the child care centre or school when the fever and rash are gone and they feel well enough to take part in activities.**

