

Seborrheic dermatitis, also known as “Seb Derm”, is a skin condition that causes a reddish rash with greasy, flaky, yellow skin patches. The rash may appear on many parts of the body including: scalp, face (particularly the eyebrows, nose, and hair-bearing areas) ears, breasts, underarms, and genital area. The flaky skin on the scalp is also known as “dandruff.” This rash is often a long-term (chronic) condition. It may last for years. But the symptoms may come and go.

The cause of seborrheic dermatitis is not fully understood. It may occur when skin glands make too much oil. It may get worse in cold weather or with stress. A type of skin fungus, or yeast, may also be linked with this condition. Often it is genetic and is seen in familial patterns as well.

## How can I prevent and/or treat Seborrheic Dermatitis

Often your provider can write a prescription for topical medications that can help manage this condition. **We recommend alternating shampoos between prescription, Selsun Blue (particularly with Salicylic acid), and Head & Shoulders. For example, use your prescription shampoo for one week then switch to Selsun for one week then Head and Shoulders for another week. This rotational method of treating will maximize the effectiveness of these agents.**

To help with itching, your provider may prescribe a low-potency topical steroid or some other anti-inflammatory topical agents. In addition, you can apply cold, wet cloths to the area to help calm the skin irritation. Some also benefit from taking an over-the-counter antihistamine, like non-drowsy fexofenadine (ALLEGRA) 180mg once daily. If you are having difficulty sleeping, you may also consider diphenhydramine (BENADRYL), but often this makes people tired and/or groggy. Please consult with your provider when taking antihistamines, and always read and follow all instructions on the label of the medication.

## If I have Seborrheic Dermatitis should I be concerned?

Generally speaking, seborrheic dermatitis is not a medical emergency and goes through periods of flaring and dormancy. Sometimes seborrheic dermatitis can be itchy, which can cause people to scratch which may increase risk of an infection. Also, it is not contagious.

**Call your provider** or seek immediate medical care if:

- The rash gets worse or spreads to other parts of your body and/or you have crusting or oozing sores
- You have signs of infection, such as increased pain, swelling, warmth, or redness to the area, red streaks leading from the rash, pus draining from the rash, and/or a fever > 100.4F.
- You have joint aches or body aches along with your rash.

Watch closely for changes in your health, and be sure to contact your doctor if:

- Your symptoms do not get better with home treatment.
- Itching interferes with your sleep or daily activities.