



## HIVES

This handout was written to answer some of the questions most often asked about the treatment of hives (urticaria). Feel free to ask your doctor or nurse to go over any information you do not understand.

### WHAT ARE HIVES?

Hives are a rash. They may be the result of an allergic reaction. Substances that are inhaled, eaten or touched may be the cause. Hives are not contagious.

The rash that occurs with hives is red and blotchy. Often, you can feel raised areas (welts) where the rash is. Hives may or may not cover the child's entire body. The rash often moves from one part of the body to another and may seem to come and go. Hives can last from a few hours to several days.

### WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT HIVES?

Some general information about hives follows:

1. The rash which occurs with hives is very itchy. Scratching may cause the rash to last longer. Your child may need medication to control the itching and/or the hives.
2. If you are aware of the cause of your child's hives, it will be necessary to avoid the substance that caused this reaction.
3. If your child's lips or eyes should become swollen or if any other problems come up, call your child's doctor. If your child has trouble breathing, go immediately to an emergency department or call an ambulance immediately.
4. Calamine lotion can be applied to the skin for itching. Creams, oils or other lotions should only be used if prescribed by the doctor for this episode of hives.

***The information contained in this handout is for general information only and should not be considered complete. For specific information on hives, please ask your doctor or nurse practitioner.***

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