

Roseola (Human Herpesvirus 6, Sixth Disease)

Roseola is a common viral infection that causes a rash in infants and children. Children usually develop roseola between six months and 24 months of age. Most children have been infected by the age of four.

Transmission

People of all ages can get roseola, but it occurs primarily in infants and children ages six to 24 months. Roseola spreads via:

- **Person to person** contact with an infected person's respiratory secretions or saliva.

A person is most contagious during the high fever before the rash occurs. It is unknown the exact length that a person can spread this disease.

Symptoms

The signs and symptoms of roseola include:

- **Very high fever** (above 103° F) lasting three to seven days.
 - The most common complication of infection is fever-related seizures, which happen in 10-15% of patients.
- **Red, raised rash.**
 - Usually appears on the day one's fever breaks (usually around the fourth day).
 - Can last hours to several days.
 - Often on the trunk with spread to the face and extremities.

Symptoms usually occur about nine to 10 days from the date of infection. Immunocompromised children are the most likely to have severe symptoms. Once someone has had roseola, they may carry the disease in their body without experiencing symptoms again.

Diagnosis

A health care provider will diagnose roseola. Laboratory tests are available but are not always used because treatment of symptoms will not change based on a positive test.

Prevention

The only action necessary to prevent the spread of roseola is to:

- **Practice proper hand washing** regularly.

Treatment

A health care provider may recommend supportive treatment (treatment to relieve symptoms). Immunocompromised people who are infected with roseola may need additional treatment.

For more information about the treatment of roseola, contact your health care provider.

Exclusion Guidance

Individuals with roseola should not be excluded from work, school, or child care unless the [general exclusions apply](#).

- They may continue to attend if a rash is present, as long as the [general exclusions](#) do not apply.

For additional information about roseola, contact the North Dakota Health and Human Services' Division of Public Health at 800.427.2180.

Resources:

1. Kimberlin, D. W., Barnett, E. D., Lynfield, R., Sawyer, M. H. (2021) Red Book: 2021- Report of the Committee on Infectious Diseases. 31st ed. American Academy of Pediatrics. [Management and Prevention of Infectious Diseases; Human Herpesvirus 6 (Including Roseola) and 7;] [pages 122-133; 422-425].
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020, September 1). *Parasites - Scabies*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved May 16, 2023, from https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/scabies/gen_info/faqs.html
3. Johns Hopkins Medicine. (2019, November 19). *Health - Conditions and Diseases - Roseola*. Johns Hopkins Medicine. Retrieved May 24, 2023, from <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/roseola>.

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