



Skin Problems with HIV **Dimock Community Health Center**



What causes skin problems in people with HIV?

Rashes and dry skin can be caused by many factors including infections and medications.

What are the common skin conditions?

Seborrheic dermatitis causes areas of itchy, dry, and flaky red skin. The face (especially the scalp and eyebrows), and body folds (under the arms and in the groin area) are the usual problem areas.

Psoriasis is a skin disease that can begin as an area of dry and reddened skin. It then forms silvery and scaling areas on the skin. Psoriasis often appears first on the elbows or knees, or on the lower back.

Herpes zoster causes small painful blisters anywhere on the body. It is especially important to call your provider if this type of rash occurs on your face because you may also need to be seen by an eye doctor.

Rashes in people with HIV can be caused by many medications given for treatment, such as Hivid (ddC), Crixivan (indinavir), Viramune (nevirapine), and Rescriptor (delavirdine).

If I have a skin problem what should I do?

It is important to see your health care provider. Your provider will examine your skin and review the medications that you are taking. Your treatment will depend on what is causing your skin condition. There are many medications used for treatment of these and other skin conditions. If the HIV medications are causing your problems, the provider will know if the medications must be changed.

What can I do to help myself?

In addition to seeing your provider, there are things you can do to help your skin. Try not to scratch because it will make your skin condition worse. Use a superfatted soap (like DOVE) for cleansing. Pat your skin dry with a cotton towel, instead of rubbing. Apply body cream over your body while the skin is damp (after showering). This keeps in your own body moisture.