



**What is seborrheic dermatitis (SD)?** SD is a common skin condition that presents as redness and greasy scaling, typically on the scalp, eyebrows, sides of the nose, ears, and central chest. The term dandruff is sometimes used interchangeably with SD, although dandruff is scaling of the scalp without any redness.

**Who gets SD?** Infants commonly develop SD, appropriately called “cradle cap,” that generally resolves on its own after a few months. It is also common in middle aged adults and the elderly. Special groups that can develop more severe cases of SD include patients with diseases of the nervous system (e.g. Parkinson’s and Down’s syndrome) or immune system (e.g. HIV).

**What causes SD?** In SD, inflammation results from a reaction to yeast that normally lives on the skin.

**How is SD treated?** Although it can not be prevented or cured, SD can usually be well-controlled with proper treatment.

- Wash your hair every day and scrub the scalp well with a medicated dandruff shampoo (e.g. Selsun Blue, Head and Shoulders, Tegrin, Neutrogena T-Gel or T-Sal). Alternate using this shampoo with a non-medicated shampoo. For example, use a medicated shampoo three times a week or every other day and a non-medicated shampoo four times a week or every other day. If one dandruff shampoo does not work, try different brands until you find one that works for you. Try rotating different shampoos every 2 months to maintain effectiveness.
- If this fails, prescription topical steroids or antifungal agents (ketoconazole) may be necessary.

**For more information about seborrheic dermatitis go to:**

[www.aad.org/public/publications/pamphlets/common\\_seb\\_dermatitis.html](http://www.aad.org/public/publications/pamphlets/common_seb_dermatitis.html)