

Malassezia



A normal skin resident. Not every rash has the same cause.

Understanding the skin microbiome

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01 What Malassezia means

Malassezia is a group of yeasts that normally live on human skin. Their presence alone does not mean disease. Under certain conditions, these yeasts can contribute to skin or scalp problems. The pattern of symptoms and a clinician’s assessment matter more than a social-media label. [2](#), [3](#)

Keep these distinctions in mind [2](#), [3](#), [4](#)

Normal skin resident	Yeast is a type of fungus
Associated with several conditions	Seborrheic dermatitis is not poor hygiene

02 Three care priorities

- 1

Confirm what you are treating
Itchy bumps, flakes and discolored patches can have different causes. A dermatologist may examine the skin and, when needed, take a sample. [2](#), [5](#)
- 2

Keep care gentle
For seborrheic dermatitis, use gentle, fragrance-free cleansing and moisturizing. Rinse thoroughly; irritating skin care can trigger a flare. [6](#)
- 3

Follow a condition-specific plan
Medicated shampoos and topical antifungals may help certain conditions. The product, application site and contact time should match your clinician’s advice and label. [5](#), [2](#)

03 Different conditions, different care

Seborrheic dermatitis

Can cause itchy, flaky or greasy-scaled skin on the scalp, face or beard area. Yeast and skin oils appear to play a role. [7](#), [3](#)
On darker skin, affected areas may look lighter, darker or purplish rather than simply red.

Tinea versicolor

Yeast overgrowth can cause scaly patches that are lighter or darker than surrounding skin; patches may itch. [4](#), [8](#)
Also called pityriasis versicolor. A change in skin color alone does not identify its cause.

Malassezia folliculitis

Often causes small, similarly sized itchy bumps or pustules around hair follicles, commonly on the chest and upper back. [2](#), [1](#)
Often nicknamed “fungal acne,” but it is not acne vulgaris. Similar-looking conditions may need different treatment.

Treatment depends on the diagnosis. Antifungal treatment and ordinary cosmetic care serve different purposes. Do not assume every dandruff shampoo works the same way: some target yeast, while others mainly reduce scale. Follow the prescribed or labeled directions rather than copying another person’s routine. [5](#)

General education, not a diagnosis or an individual treatment plan. Consult a board-certified dermatologist for persistent, recurrent or unexplained skin or scalp symptoms.

Sources & product details

Sources checked 2026-09-14

1. [Cleveland Clinic · Fungal acne explained](#)

3. [AAD · Seborrheic dermatitis causes](#)

5. [AAD · Diagnosis & treatment](#)

7. [AAD · Seborrheic dermatitis symptoms](#)
2. [DermNet · Malassezia folliculitis](#)

4. [AAD · Tinea versicolor overview](#)

6. [AAD · Seborrheic dermatitis self-care](#)

8. [AAD · Tinea versicolor symptoms](#)