

**Intertigo** is a very common on medical condition, which can be easily treated and managed.  
This leaflet is de

signed to raise awareness and to aid self-help.

Seek advice from your local pharmacist or speak to your



Norfolk and Norwich  
University Hospitals  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Understanding Under-Breast Soreness (Intertrigo)



## Symptoms and Treatment

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Patient Information Leaflet for: Understanding Under-Breast

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Adapted from the research undertaken by Marilyn O-Connell  
(Assistant Practitioner in Breast Screening, King's Lynn).

## What Is Under-Breast Soreness?

Under-breast soreness (UBS), or **Intertrigo**, is a very common medical condition which usually affects women who are larger breasted or very sporty. Intertrigo is an infection caused by a yeast condition called *Candida albicans* which comes from the same family of yeast infections that cause Athletes Foot. Diabetes can also affect the skin making it more prone to fungal and bacterial infections.

## Causes

The main causes are sweat rash, 'skin to skin' rubbing and the growth of yeast which appear as a rash in the skin fold under the breast. This is commonly known as **Intertrigo**. If untreated, it may worsen, become infected and possibly spread to other parts of the body. In some cases it can lead to a creamy coloured discharge with a pungent smell.

## Symptoms

The main symptoms are:

- Inflammation
- Soreness/Discomfort
- Redness/Split skin
- Spots
- Itching
- Discharge (often smelly)

These can range from mild or moderate, to severe.



## Treatment

The most effective treatment for UBS is:

- Wash the area regularly and pat dry rather than rubbing.
- Wear a good supportive bra to reduce 'skin to skin' rubbing. Cotton is more effective than nylon, which is known to make the condition worse.
- Avoid sharing flannels or towels to prevent spreading any infection.
- If the skin is very red, inflamed or sore, apply a hydrocortisone\* cream.
- If the skin is red, sore and itchy, apply an anti-fungal\* cream or powder.
- Once the infection has cleared, it may be advisable to use a barrier\* cream to help stop the infection returning.

If none of the above treatments helps or your symptoms worsen, make an appointment to see your doctor.

\*Hydrocortisone, anti-fungal creams/powders and barrier creams are all available over the counter. If uncertain of which treatment is most suitable, seek advice from your pharmacist.

