



York and Scarborough  
Teaching Hospitals  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Understanding Under-breast Soreness (Intertrigo)

## Symptoms and Treatment

① For more information please contact:

**North Yorkshire Breast Screening Service**

Magnolia Centre  
The York Hospital, Wigginton Road, York, YO31 8HE

Tel: 01904 725590 or 01904 725591

## What causes Under-breast Soreness?

Under-breast soreness usually occurs in women who are larger breasted or sporty.

The main causes are a 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, Intertrigo can spread to other parts of the body or worsen. In some cases it can lead to creamy coloured discharge that omits a pungent smell.

Intertrigo is often caused by a yeast condition called *Candida albicans*. This comes from the same family of yeast infections that cause Athletes Foot, Jock Itch and Nappy Rash.

Intertrigo is very common. This leaflet is designed to raise awareness of the condition and aid self-help treatment.

For further information or advice contact your local doctor, pharmacy or breast screening unit.

# What are the symptoms of Intertrigo?

The main symptoms are:

- Discharge (may be pungent)
- Inflammation
- Soreness / discomfort
- Split skin
- Spots
- Itching



## What is the most effective self-help treatment?

The most effective self-help treatments for Under-breast Soreness are:

- Wash the affected area morning and night and pat dry, rather than rub dry.
- Wear good supportive bras. To help stop the 'skin to skin' rubbing cotton bras are known to be more effective. Nylon bras are known to make the condition worse.
- Do not share flannels or towels, to avoid the spread of infection.
- In cases where the skin is red, sore, or itchy, ask your pharmacist for an \*Anti-fungal cream or powder and apply it as directed.
- Once the infection has cleared, it may be advisable to use a \*barrier cream i.e. zinc and castor oil to help stop the infection returning.
- Treatment of Diabetes Mellitus and obesity may reduce infection.

\* Anti-fungal creams/powders and barrier creams are all available to buy over the counter, please follow instructions.

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

## Contact Information

North Yorkshire Breast Screening Service  
Magnolia Centre  
York Hospital  
Wigginton Road  
York  
YO31 8HE

Tel: 01904 725590 or 01904 725591

## Acknowledgements

This leaflet has been reproduced for use in York Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust with kind permission from the following:

Marilyn O'Connell (AP Breast Screening)  
Breast Screening Unit, Queen Elizabeth Hospital, NHS Foundation Trust, for original leaflet research and design.

The Queen Elizabeth Hospital Breast Screening Team and the King's Lynn breast screening team for their help and support in the completing this leaflet.



## **Tell us what you think of this leaflet**

We hope that you found this leaflet helpful. If you would like to tell us what you think, please contact:

Breast Imaging Unit, Magnolia Centre, The York Hospital, Wigginton Road, York, YO31 8HE, telephone 01904 725590 or 01904 725591.

## **Teaching, Training and Research**

Our Trust is committed to teaching, training and research to support the development of health and healthcare in our community. Healthcare students may observe consultations for this purpose. You can opt out if you do not want students to observe. We may also ask you if you would like to be involved in our research.

## **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)**

PALS offers impartial advice and assistance to patients, their relatives, friends and carers. We can listen to feedback (positive or negative), answer questions and help resolve any concerns about Trust services.

PALS can be contacted on 01904 726262, or email [yhs-tr.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net](mailto:yhs-tr.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net).

An answer phone is available out of hours.

# Leaflets in alternative languages or formats

If you would like this information in a different format, including braille or easy read, or translated into a different language, please speak to a member of staff in the ward or department providing your care.

Patient Information Leaflets can be accessed via the Trust's Patient Information Leaflet website:  
[www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk/your-visit/patient-information-leaflets/](http://www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk/your-visit/patient-information-leaflets/)

Owner	Breast Imaging Unit
Date first issued	May 2018
Review Date	July 2028
Version	1 (reissued July 2025)
Approved by	North Yorkshire Breast Imaging Service
Document Reference	PIL 1135 v1.3
© 2025 York and Scarborough Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. All Rights reserved.	