

Referral Support Service

Breast

B09

Nipple Changes

Definition

Distortion / retraction of nipple
Nipple rash

Red flags

Recent change in nipple
NON itchy rash or persistence of itchy rash after treatment

Management

1. Nipple inversion can be a normal finding in some people. If it has been present for a long time the patient does not need referral. Patients only require referral if the nipple retraction is new and persistent, or associated with other symptoms
2. A non-itchy rash more likely to be pathological and may represent Paget's Disease
3. Persistent itchy rash around the nipple is often a simple rash that happens to be on the breast rather than related to an underlying breast cancer. Consider the causes. DermnetNZ has good information on nipple eczema and differential. [Nipple eczema | DermNet NZ](#)
4. Treat any infection or eczema present
5. If rash **persists** then **refer to Breast clinic**
6. If rash is clearly part of a more **widespread skin condition**, then refer to dermatology

Referral Information

If any red flags – needs 2WW referral

Patient information leaflets/ PDAs

[Paget's disease of the nipple - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk)

[Eczema of the Nipple \(breastcancer.org\)](http://breastcancer.org)

References

[Nipple retraction and rashes \(kernowccg.nhs.uk\)](http://kernowccg.nhs.uk) reviewed Dec 2019

NICE guidance 12 Suspected Cancer Recognition and Referral reviewed Jan 2021