

Letter to the Editor

Use of the Word *Rash*

Dear *Cutis*®:

I object to the use of the word *rash* in reference to skin eruptions and dermatitides in scientific publications and when used by dermatologists. *Dorland's Medical Dictionary* defines the word as "a temporary eruption on the skin, as in urticaria; a drug eruption or viral exanthem." *Webster's New World Dictionary* states that the word refers to an eruption of spots on the skin, usually temporary. The word *rash* is a lay or slang term. Dermatologists don't use the word *scab* for crusts or *pimple* for papule or pustule. Use of the word *rash* by dermatologists, in my opinion, is unprofessional and demeaning to our magnificent specialty. Two of my mentors, Drs. Sture A.M. Johnson and Eugene Farber objected to the use of the word, as did Dr. Henry Michelson of Minneapolis. In the future, I would suggest that we restrict use of this word to signify anything that is too hasty, incautious, or reckless, as also defined in *Webster's New World Dictionary*.

Sincerely,
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