



The rash is photosensitive reaction to sunlight either due to a photoallergic reaction or a Polymorphic Light Eruption (PLME). In young children, photoallergic reactions are typically due to chemicals in their sunscreen (cinnamates, benzophenones, or salicylates). If the sunscreen he is using contains any of these, discontinue its use and use clothing or zinc oxide for sun protection. The cause of PLME is unknown but it typically occurs in fair-skinned individuals who live in cool climates within hours to days of sun exposure; it resolves on its own within a few days. Low dose—25 mg every six hours—Benadryl™ (diphenhydramine) can help with the itching in some people but can also cause nightmares (rare) in some children; drowsiness is more common. Since your friend's son doesn't seem to be bothered by the itchiness, I wouldn't worry about it. Swimming in the cool water should help.

Given that he lives in the mountains of northern BC, I suspect his rash is due to PLME. In either case, the rash should resolve within the next few days. When he's out of the water, have him wear a wide-brimmed hat.