

# Common Conditions in Skin of Color

## What is dermatosis papulosa nigra?

Dermatosis papulosa nigra (DUR-muh-TOE-sis PAP-yoo-LOW-suh NIE-gruh) is small, smooth, dark bumps on the skin. Usually, the bumps are not painful and do not itch. They are not harmful. They are mostly on the face, but also can be on the chest and back. Men and women can get these bumps. They may appear in early adulthood and increase in number over time. The cause of dermatosis papulosa nigra is not known, but if a member of your family has it, you are more likely to get it. You do not need treatment if you have it, and there is no way to prevent getting it.

## What is pseudofolliculitis barbae?

Pseudofolliculitis barbae (SOO-doh-fuh-LICK-yoo-LIE-tis BAR-bee) is small bumps on the skin after shaving or plucking hair. Sometimes they are called razor bumps. They can be tender and red. Men can get these bumps after shaving the beard area. Women can get these bumps if they pluck hair on their face or pubic area.

People with tightly curled hair are more likely to have these bumps. The bumps can be treated with creams. Sometimes oral medicines are used if there is an infection. Stopping hair removal is the best way to prevent this condition. If you do not want to stop shaving, use clippers instead of a razor. Ask your doctor about other ways to stop hair growth, such as laser hair reduction.

## What is acne keloidalis nuchae?

Acne keloidalis nuchae (ACK-nee KEY-loyd-AL-is NOOK-ee) is small and large bumps on the back of the scalp. Men get them more often than women. The bumps are skin-colored and can be itchy, tender, or have pus inside them. Some bumps may get bigger over time. Hair may fall out in areas where the bumps are. Treatment includes oral medicines and creams. This condition is not dangerous.

## What are keloids?

Keloids (KEY-loyds) are smooth, shiny, thick scars on your skin. They may be painful or itch. They can happen months or years after hurting your skin or after getting tattoos or piercings. If you have one of these scars, you are more likely to have another. You may need a shot of medicine to make the scar soft and flat. Laser therapy or surgery may be needed. Sometimes the scars can come back after surgery.

## What is acral lentiginous melanoma?

Acral lentiginous melanoma (ACK-rull len-TIJ-ih-nuss MEL-uh-NO-muh) is a type of skin cancer that can spread to other parts of the body. It is most common in people with darker skin. It is found on the hands, feet, and nails, and in the mouth. It can be dangerous if not treated. To see if you have it, look for new moles or other growths on the skin. When found



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# Common Conditions in Skin of Color (continued)

early, melanoma can be treated with surgery. Tell your doctor right away if you see any of these changes:

- One-half of the growth does not look like the other half
- The outline or border of the growth is not smooth
- More than one color within the same growth
- The size is greater than 6 mm
- The growth is changing in any way

## Where can I get more information?

Your doctor

American Academy of Dermatology  
<http://www.aad.org/dermatology-a-to-z/dermatology-a-to-z>

National Cancer Institute  
<http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/prevention/skin-anyone-can-get-skin-cancer>

Skin of Color Society  
<http://www.skinofcolor.org>

### Notes:

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**This handout is provided to you by your family doctor and the American Academy of Family Physicians. Other health-related information is available from the AAFP online at <http://familydoctor.org>.**

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