

Common Skin Conditions in Skin of Color

What is dermatosis papulosa nigra?

Dermatosis papulosa nigra (DUR-muh-TOE-sis PAP-yoo-LOW-suh NIE-gruh) are small, smooth, dark bumps on the skin. The bumps are usually 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. Both 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 you are more likely to get it if a member of your family has it. You do not need treatment if you have it, and there is no way to prevent it.

What is pseudofolliculitis barbae?

Pseudofolliculitis barbae (SOO-doh-fuh-LICK-yoo-LIE-tis BAR-bee) are small bumps on the skin that occur in areas where hair has been shaved or plucked (e.g., face, armpits, pubic hair). Sometimes they are called razor bumps. They can be tender and red.

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 complete hair removal is the best way to prevent this condition. If you have to continue shaving, use electric clippers instead of a manual 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) causes small and large bumps on the back of the scalp. Men get them more often than women. The bumps are the same color as your skin and can be itchy, tender, or have pus inside them. Some bumps may get bigger over time. Hair may fall out where the bumps are. Treatment includes creams and oral medicines. This condition is not harmful.

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. Keloids can come back after surgical removal.

Where can I get more information?

Your doctor

American Academy of Dermatology

<https://www.aad.org/dermatology-a-to-z/dermatology-a-to-z>

Skin of Color Society

<https://www.skinofcolorsociety.org/patient-dermatology-education>

January 2023



AMERICAN ACADEMY OF
FAMILY PHYSICIANS

Adapted with permission from Kundu RV, Patterson S. Dermatologic conditions in skin of color: part I. Special considerations for common skin disorders. *Am Fam Physician*. 2013;87(12):online. Accessed July 26, 2022. <https://www.aafp.org/pubs/afp/issues/2013/0615/p850-s1.html>

This handout is provided to you by your family doctor and the American Academy of Family Physicians.

This information provides a general overview and may not apply to everyone. Talk to your family doctor to find out if this information applies to you and to get more information on this subject. Copyright © 2023 American Academy of Family Physicians. Individuals may photocopy this material for their own personal reference, and physicians may photocopy for use with their own patients. Written permission is required for all other uses, including electronic uses.