

PITYRIASIS ALBA

What is pityriasis alba?

Pityriasis alba is a common skin condition in children. It is related to dry or irritated skin, and will not harm your child. It looks like patchy areas of lighter skin on the face as well as the neck, arms, and/or upper chest. It is more often noticed in children with darker skin, but can be seen in fair-skinned children as well. It is most obvious in the summer because the unaffected skin will tan, while the areas of pityriasis alba do not tan as well. This is not a condition called “vitiligo” (where the skin is completely white).



What can be done for it?

The best treatments for pityriasis alba include using sunscreen to prevent tanning of the normal-looking skin and frequent moisturizing of the skin. If there is a lot of redness and itchiness, a mild topical corticosteroid such as hydrocortisone or other anti-inflammatory agents such as Elidel® or Protopic® put on the skin for a few days to decrease the irritation and allow the skin to heal. Once the irritation and dryness resolves, the skin will slowly return to its normal colour. However, it may take several months for the normal colour to return. Apply frequent moisturizers to your child's skin to stop new spots from occurring.

It's important to remember that these spots are harmless and don't need to be treated.

