

PITYRIASIS LICHENOIDES

What is pityriasis lichenoides?

Pityriasis lichenoides is an uncommon rash that (despite its long and fancy name) is harmless and will go away with time (although it takes months to years to go away without treatment).

Patients with this condition can have two different types of rashes. The first looks like little red bumps that come up in crops and can get scaly and crusted before fading away. When it fades, it can

sometimes leave scars. Many people mistake this for chicken pox, but it lasts much longer than what you would expect with chicken pox. This type is called "PLEVA" (pityriasis lichenoides et varioliformis acuta).

The second type of rash is also scaly but are not a bumpy as the first rash. As these fade away, you are often left with white spots on the skin that eventually go away. This type is called "PLC" (pityriasis lichenoides chronica).



What causes pityriasis lichenoides?

Pityriasis lichenoides is thought to be caused by an overstimulated immune system.

What can be done for pityriasis lichenoides?

Pityriasis lichenoides is usually treated with either UVB light therapy or a long course (3 months) of anti-inflammatory antibiotics like erythromycin, azithromycin or doxycycline. Steroid creams don't seem to help make the rash go away any faster, but can help with itchiness. Because the rash is harmless and will go away with time, one option is also to do nothing. If the rash is still present, it is important to keep regular visits with your doctor to make sure the rash does not evolve into something worrisome.

