NEVUS ACHROMICUS

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Nevus Achromicus, often referred to as white or colorless moles, are skin growths that lack pigment, which gives them their distinctive pale appearance. These nevi are characterized as a well-defined pale patch, usually several centimeters in diameter, with a well-defined but irregular border. These nevi are generally harmless, but it's essential to have them examined by a dermatologist to rule out any potential issues. Although achromic nevi are most commonly congenital, they can develop at any age. The differential diagnosis for achromic nevi includes hypopigmented patches (pityriasis alba, tinea versicolor, or post-inflammatory hypopigmentation), vitiligo, lichen sclerosus, nevus depigmentosus, and amelanotic melanoma. Achromic nevi are typically solitary lesions compared to the ash-leaf spots seen in tuberous sclerosis.

Diagnosis typically involves a visual examination, where the doctor will assess the mole's size, shape, and borders of the lesion. Dermoscopy commonly reveals a serrated border, pallor, and faint pigment. In some cases, a biopsy may be performed to ensure it's not a more concerning skin condition. Biopsy of an achromic nevus may show normal to slightly reduced melanocytes with decreased melanin production. Wood lamp examination of achromic nevi appears off-white, compared to the chalk-white appearance seen in vitiligo.

Treatment for achromic nevi is typically not necessary, as they are usually benign. However, if their appearance becomes concerning or if they become irritated or change, removal options can be discussed with a dermatologist. Removal methods may include surgical excision or laser therapy (excimer laser or phototherapy) for repigmentation. Following your dermatologist's advice and monitoring your skin for any changes is essential, as early detection is crucial in identifying potential problems.