



# PITYRIASIS ALBA

<http://www.aocd.org>

Pityriasis alba is a common skin condition first characterized by red, scaly patches. These patches resolve leaving areas of scaling hypo-pigmentation, or lighter coloration. Patients do not usually seek treatment of the lesions until this stage because of the concern for the appearance of the scales. The cause of pityriasis alba is unknown, although it has been regarded as a manifestation of another skin disorder called **atopic dermatitis**.

The lesions may be round, oval or irregular in shape and red, pink or skin colored. Several patches may be observed at once usually on the face and arms. The duration of the rash is variable, lasting from several months to over a year. Lesions can appear several times. The lesions are obvious on those with darker skin. Patients with lighter skin will notice the rash more frequently during the summer months as their skin tans. Young children are most often affected but pityriasis alba tends to go away by adulthood. The loss of pigment associated with pityriasis alba is not permanent.

Diagnosis is usually made solely on clinical signs and symptoms. A **biopsy** may be performed but usually will show unimpressive changes under the microscope.

Pityriasis alba sometimes works itself out spontaneously and does not always require treatment. A moisturizer cream or lotion may be recommended to retain moisture in the skin. A low potency **topical corticosteroid** may also be prescribed to decrease inflammation and reduce symptoms. Elidel, a nonsteroidal topical cream, can also reduce itching and redness associated with pityriasis alba for those over the age of two.

**This information has been provided to you compliments of the American Osteopathic College of Dermatology and your physician.**

*The medical information provided in this article is for educational purposes only and is the property of the American Osteopathic College of Dermatology. It is not intended nor implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice and shall not create a physician - patient relationship. If you have a specific question or concern about a skin lesion or disease, please consult a dermatologist. Any use, re-creation, dissemination, forwarding or copying of this information is strictly prohibited unless expressed written permission is given by the American Osteopathic College of Dermatology. For detailed information including links to related topics on this and many other skin conditions with photos, visit: <https://www.aocd.org/page/DiseaseDatabaseHome>*