ATROPHIE BLANCHE

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Atrophie blanche is a term used to describe a specific pattern of scarring that occurs after an ulcer heals. It originates with injury to an area of poor wound healing resulting in a painful purpuric lesion that progresses to a punched-out ulcer. This phenomenon is called livedoid vasculopathy. These slow healing ulcers usually appear on the lower legs, especially at the ankles and top of the feet. Once the ulcer heals, atrophie blanche appears as a smooth, white, polygonal or star-shaped scar that may have surrounding telangectasias and hyperpigmentation.

This chronic skin condition most commonly occurs in middle-aged females and worsens in a hot climate and pregnancy. Although the mechanism is not fully understood, this condition is often associated with chronic venous insufficiency. The goal of treatment is to prevent ulcer formation, improve blood flow and control pain. First line medical treatment includes antiplatelet (aspirin, dipyridamole or pentoxifylline) or anticoagulation (heparin or warfarin) therapy. Smoking cessation and compression therapy are also highly recommended. Other second line treatments include nifedipine, sulfasalazine, intravenous immunoglobulins, danazol, hyperbaric oxygen, phototherapy (PUVA) or doxycycline.