



# VENOUS LAKE

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Venous lakes are small, dark blue to purple slightly elevated papules. These papules are soft and compressible. They commonly appear on sun-exposed areas such as the face, lips, ears, neck and back of the hand of elderly people. These little purple papules are typically asymptomatic, causing no pain or symptoms. They are benign, but often are confused with melanoma therefore they should be evaluated by your doctor.

The cause of venous lakes is still not completely understood. The most likely cause is chronic sun damage to the walls of the superficial veins. This damage leads to the dilation of veins on the surface of the skin resulting in an elevated, dark blue papule.

If the venous lake becomes traumatized it may become tender and result in bleeding. However, the vast majority of venous lakes are asymptomatic so treatment is mostly cosmetic. There are several treatment options to remove venous lakes including: **light electrocautery, laser ablation, liquid nitrogen cryosurgery** and rarely surgical removal.

Because venous lakes are most likely the cause of chronic sun exposure this is yet another reason to use protection by applying **sunscreen** before spending time in the sun.

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

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