XANTHOMA

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Xanthomas are localized skin blemishes that form due to a buildup of fats underneath the skin surface. They are usually caused by high levels of blood lipids or fats, and typically affect adults, although children with genetically high cholesterol in the blood may also present with xanthomas.

Several types of xanthomas exist and are classified by their clinical presentation. **Xanthelasma**, the most common form, is usually present around the inner corner of the upper eyelid and presents as soft, yellow or yellow-orange **macules**, **papules**, or **plaques**. Palmar xanthomas present as yellow-orange accentuations located in the palmar and wrist creases; and it is diagnostic for Type III hyperlipoproteinemia. Tuberous xanthomas are firm, painless, red-yellow **nodules** that develop over pressure areas including the knees, elbows, and heels. These lesions may coalesce to form large multilobulated masses. Tendon xanthomas are gradually enlarging subcutaneous **nodules** found on the Achilles tendon or tendons over the knuckles. Eruptive xanthomas display as 2-5 mm yellow **papules** with a red rim over extensor surfaces, such as the buttocks or shoulders, and may spread to inside the mouth. These lesions may be also present as tender and itchy.

Xanthomas may be an indicative sign of an imbalance of lipids in the blood, and complications from this imbalance include pancreatitis or cardiovascular diseases. Xanthomas are often clinically diagnosed and further investigations to determine any underlying conditions include lipid profile, liver, thyroid and renal function tests, and fasting blood glucose.