

PITYRIASIS ALBA

Pityriasis Alba is a common skin problem that otherwise healthy individuals can develop. It is often associated with other sensitive skin conditions such as atopic dermatitis (eczema). The exact cause is unknown. The word "Pityriasis" means spots, and the word "Alba" means white.

Pityriasis Alba may begin as areas of redness. Eventually, round patches appear white or lighter than the normal skin tone (hypopigmented). The lightened patches of skin may develop fine scales. These hypopigmented patches do not tan. If your normal skin tans this may allow the Pityriasis Alba to stand out more. The affected areas may be slightly itchy.

Pityriasis Alba most commonly affects the face, neck, arms, and shoulders. It commonly affects children and young adults, but it can occur in any age group.

Pityriasis Alba is often confused with such skin problems as vitiligo, tinea versicolor, and tinea corporis (ringworm). It is important to recognize that Pityriasis Alba is unrelated to these conditions. It is not an infection.

Pityriasis Alba usually resolves with time. The normal color gradually returns to the skin. This process often takes many months, but can take years. In children, Pityriasis Alba often improves after puberty. There are various topical medications which can help the Pityriasis Alba lesions to fade. I will discuss which of these treatments would be best for your situation.

Although it may take a while, the signs of Pityriasis Alba will eventually improve significantly. Hopefully your skin will return to its normal color. Sometimes, however, Pityriasis Alba may reoccur.

If you have any further questions about Pityriasis Alba, please do not hesitate to ask.