

Pityrosporum Folliculitis

Pityrosporum folliculitis is a condition where yeast, pityrosporum, gets down into the hair follicles and multiplies, setting up an itchy, acne-like eruption. Pityrosporum follicles sometimes turns out to be the reason a case of acne isn't getting better after being on antibiotics for months.

This yeast is a normal skin inhabitant. Everyone has it on his or her skin but in most cases it causes no problem. The condition affects young to middle-aged adults of either sex.

The rash consists of tiny itchy rounded pink pimples with an occasional tiny whitehead. The spots are located mainly on the upper back, shoulders and chest. Sometimes spots are found on the forearms, back of the hands, lower legs and face. The tendency to scratch spots is greatest on the forearms, face and scalp. Most patients have oily skin.

Most patients seek advice because of the itch or worsening acne like rash accompanied by a stinging sensation. Some patients notice the itch is worse after sweat inducing exercise or after a hot shower. When scratched, the spots may display a local hive-like reaction with a surrounding red flare.

Pityrosporum folliculitis is not an infection as such; it is an overgrowth of what is normally there. The yeast overgrowth may be encouraged by external factors and/or by reduced resistance on the part of the host.

Oral treatments are the most effective. The two anti-yeast antibiotics most commonly used are itraconazole or ketoconazole. It may take a few weeks for clearing to occur and longer for the spots to fade.