



Authoritative facts about the skin from the [New Zealand Dermatological Society Incorporated](#).

[Home](#) | [Bacterial infections](#)

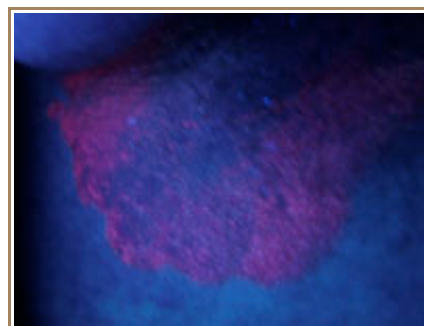
## Erythrasma

### What is erythrasma?

Erythrasma is a common skin condition affecting the skin folds such as under the arms, in the groin and between the toes.

Erythrasma does not usually cause any symptoms. It presents as a slowly enlarging area of pink or brown dry skin.

#### Erythrasma



Wood's light fluorescence

### What is the cause of erythrasma?

The cause of erythrasma is a bacterial infection. The bacteria responsible for erythrasma are *Corynebacterium minutissimum*. This may coexist with a [dermatophyte](#) fungi or with [Candida albicans](#) (thrush).

Erythrasma can be confused with other causes of [intertrigo](#) (rash in the skin folds).

Erythrasma can infect anyone, but is particularly prevalent in those living in a warm climate or who have diabetes.

### How is the diagnosis made?

Exposure to longwave ultraviolet radiation (such as with a black light or Wood's light) causes the erythrasma to fluoresce a coral-pink colour due to porphyrins released by the bacteria.

The diagnosis can be confirmed by a swab or scraping for microscopy and culture.

### What is the treatment?

Erythrasma can be treated with [antiseptic](#) or [topical antibiotic](#) such as:

- Fusidic acid cream
- [Clindamycin](#) solution
- Whitfield's ointment

Extensive infection can be treated with oral [antibiotics](#), including [erythromycin](#) or [tetracycline](#) and usually

responds promptly. Antibacterial soap can be used to prevent recurrence.

#### Related information

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- [Erythrasma](#) - emedicine dermatology, the online textbook

DermNet does not provide an on-line consultation service.

If you have any concerns with your skin or its treatment, see a [dermatologist](#) for advice.

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