



## Acquired keratoderma

### What are acquired keratodermas?

Acquired keratoderma are keratodermas that are NOT inherited as a primary genetic condition. They may occur as part of a generalised skin condition (some of which may be inherited) or as a result of another illness.

### How do they present?

Acquired palmoplantar keratoderma is more likely to present in adulthood (compared with inherited keratodermas which usually present in childhood). It presents with thickening of the skin of the palms and/or soles which may be diffuse (involving most of the palms and soles) or focal (localised mainly to pressure areas).

#### Acquired keratoderma



Psoriasis



Psoriasis



Psoriasis



Chronic eczema



Chronic eczema



Focal keratoderma

### What causes acquired keratoderma?

Some of the causes of acquired keratoderma are shown in the table below.

<p>Inflammatory skin conditions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Psoriasis</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Dermatitis (eczema)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Lupus erythematosus</a></li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Lichen planus</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Pityriasis rubra pilaris</a></li> <li>• Erythrokeratoderma</li> </ul>
Infections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Reiter syndrome</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Dermatophyte fungal infection (tinea)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Syphilis</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Crusted scabies</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Extensive viral warts</a> (usually in immunosuppressed patients)</li> </ul>
Circulatory problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Lymphoedema</a></li> </ul>
Secondary to inherited conditions that may not usually result in keratoderma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Ichthyosis</a></li> <li>• Ectodermal dysplasia</li> <li>• <a href="#">Epidermolysis bullosa</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Erythrokeratoderma</a></li> </ul>
Medications and toxins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Iodine</li> <li>• Lithium</li> <li>• Tegafur</li> <li>• Glucan</li> <li>• Halogenated weed-killers</li> <li>• <a href="#">Arsenic</a></li> <li>• Dioxin</li> <li>• Chemotherapeutic agents used in cancer treatment</li> </ul>
Internal illness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Myxoedema (<a href="#">thyroid disease</a>)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Internal malignancy</a> (cancer) has been associated with the development of acquired keratoderma</li> </ul>
Miscellaneous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keratoderma climacterum is a keratoderma that usually develops in middle-aged woman. It has been suggested that this is related to the menopause.</li> </ul>

## Treatment of acquired keratoderma

The following treatments soften the thickened skin and make them less noticeable.

- [Emollients](#)
- Keratolytics (e.g. 6% [salicylic acid](#) in 70% propylene glycol)
- [Topical retinoids](#)
- Topical vitamin D ointment ([calcipotriol](#))
- Systemic retinoids ([acitretin](#))

### Related information

#### References:

#### On DermNet NZ:

- [Palmoplantar keratoderma](#) (introduction)

- [Diffuse hereditary palmoplantar keratoderma](#)
- [Hereditary focal palmoplantar keratoderma](#)
- [Punctate keratoderma](#)
- [Cracked heels](#)

**Other websites:**

- [Keratosis Palmaris et Plantaris](#) - emedicine dermatology, the online textbook

**Books about skin diseases:**

See the [DermNet NZ bookstore](#)

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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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