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Linear porokeratosis

Linear porokeratosis is an unusual skin condition that can be present at birth or not develop until adult life. Occasionally there is a family history of linear porokeratosis or another kind of porokeratosis such as disseminated superficial actinic porokeratosis ([DSAP](#)), suggesting a genetic predisposition.

The term "porokeratosis" refers to a roundish skin lesion with a thinned centre surrounded by a ridge-like border called the cornoid lamella. The cornoid lamella is due to an expanding proliferation of unusual keratinocytes (horny skin cells).

Features of linear porokeratosis

Numerous grouped patches arise in linear porokeratosis, each with the characteristic ridge on its border and central furrow. They are arranged in one or more lines along a limb or on one side of the trunk, head and/or neck, following a dermatomal distribution (i.e. along the pathway of a sensory nerve).

Linear porokeratosis



A [skin cancer](#) can develop within a linear porokeratosis patch. This may be either a [basal](#) or [squamous cell carcinoma](#), and is more likely to occur in older adults. If a lump or sore appears within a porokeratosis lesion, arrange for it to be reviewed by your dermatologist. It may require a [biopsy](#) or cutting out.

Treatment of linear porokeratosis

There is no known cure for linear porokeratosis and treatment is generally disappointing. However, the appearance may improve with the following measures:

- [5-fluorouracil cream](#)
- [calcipotriol cream](#)
- oral [acitretin](#) or [isotretinoin](#)
- [cryotherapy](#)
- [dermabrasion](#)
- carbon dioxide laser ablation

[Sun protection](#) is very important as exposure to ultraviolet radiation may result in the development of skin cancer lesions within the linear porokeratosis.

Related information

References:

On DermNet NZ:

- [Birthmarks](#)
- [Disseminated superficial actinic porokeratosis](#)
- [Porokeratosis of Mibelli](#)

Other websites:

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

Author: Vanessa Ngan, staff writer

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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