

# PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET

## PITYRIASIS ALBA



### WHAT ARE THE AIMS OF THIS LEAFLET?

This leaflet has been written to help you understand more about pityriasis alba. It tells you what it is, what causes it, what can be done about it, and where you can find out more about it.

### WHAT IS PITYRIASIS ALBA?

Pityriasis alba is a common skin condition that is mostly seen in children and young adults.

*Pityriasis* means *fine scale* and *alba* means *white* in Latin. Pityriasis alba appears as scaly oval or round patches which can later leave paler areas on the skin. These paler areas may be more noticeable in people with richly pigmented skin tones, such as brown or black skin, and may become more obvious after sun exposure and tanning of non-affected skin.

### WHAT CAUSES PITYRIASIS ALBA?

The cause is unknown. Pityriasis alba is thought to be due to inflammation of the skin and is thought to be a type of low-grade **eczema**. The condition is not contagious or hereditary.

### WHAT DOES PITYRIASIS ALBA FEEL AND LOOK LIKE?

The affected patches of skin are accompanied by little or no itch. The most commonly affected areas are the face and upper body.

### HOW IS PITYRIASIS ALBA DIAGNOSED?

This condition is usually diagnosed by clinical appearance by healthcare professional and additional tests are not needed.

### HOW CAN PITYRIASIS ALBA BE TREATED?

Pityriasis alba resolves by itself gradually, and the paler areas of skin return back to normal skin with no scarring. Most cases typically return to normal skin tone within months to a year.

No treatments are usually required for the condition. However, a moisturising cream may be used to improve any dry skin and fine scale of the skin. Sunscreens may prevent sunburn and any patches becoming more noticeable by reducing any darkening of surrounding skin.

Your healthcare professional could suggest the use of steroid creams or ointments if the patches are particularly bothersome.

### WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION PITYRIASIS ALBA?

*Web links to other relevant sources:*

[www.dermnetnz.org/topics/pityriasis-alba](http://www.dermnetnz.org/topics/pityriasis-alba)

[www.skinsight.com/skin-conditions/pityriasis-alba/](http://www.skinsight.com/skin-conditions/pityriasis-alba/)

Jargon Buster:

[www.skinhealthinfo.org.uk/support-resources/jargon-buster/](http://www.skinhealthinfo.org.uk/support-resources/jargon-buster/)

*Please note that the British Association of Dermatologists (BAD) provides web links to additional resources to help people access a range of information about their treatment or skin condition. The views expressed in these external resources may not be shared by the BAD or its members. The BAD has no control of and does not endorse the content of external links.*



This leaflet aims to provide accurate information about the subject and is a consensus of the views held by representatives of the British Association of Dermatologists: individual patient circumstances may differ, which might alter both the advice and course of therapy given to you by your doctor.

*This leaflet has been assessed for readability by the British Association of Dermatologists' Patient Information Lay Review Panel*

## **BRITISH ASSOCIATION OF DERMATOLOGISTS**

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