



## BASIC INFORMATION

### DESCRIPTION

An overgrowth of fibrous tissue (scar) on the skin. Keloids can appear anywhere on the skin, but most commonly appear on the earlobes, chest, upper back, and shoulders. Keloids are more frequent in black people than in white people and occur more often in young women.

### FREQUENT SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- Keloids begin as a small bump. The lump grows and turns into firm, raised, hard scars that are slightly pink.
- Scars may continue to grow over a period of time.
- May itch or cause burning sensation.
- They may become a cosmetic problem.
- Scars may become irritated from rubbing on clothing.

### CAUSES

Keloids probably occur due to a defective healing process. An excess of collagen forms at the site of a healing scar. Keloids usually arise in an area of injury (such as after a burn or from severe acne), but sometimes arise from a very minor scratch. Why they occur in certain people is unknown.

### RISK INCREASES WITH

- Family history of keloids.
- Dark skin pigment.
- Surgical wound.
- Acne.
- Burn injury.
- Ear piercing.
- Vaccination.
- Insect bite.
- Folliculitis barbae (inflammation of a hair follicle).

### PREVENTIVE MEASURES

- Avoid injuries to the skin.
- For patients with known tendency to keloid formation, elective surgery should be avoided. If a procedure is necessary, special precautions should be implemented.

### EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Scars gradually diminish with treatment. Sometimes, keloids heal on their own. Keloids are generally considered harmless and noncancerous.

### POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS

They may recur, despite treatment.



## DIAGNOSIS & TREATMENT

### GENERAL MEASURES

- Your health care provider can diagnose keloids by their appearance on the skin. Other medical tests are usually not needed, but may be done to rule out any other skin problem.
- There are a variety of treatment options. Your health care provider will discuss them with you.
- Treatment may include injections into the scars. This may be combined with surgery to help remove the scars.
- Surgery may also be done in combination with radiation therapy.
- Cryotherapy involves freezing the affected area with liquid nitrogen.
- Special gel sheeting can be used to flatten the scars. It is applied to the area and changed about every week or 10 days for as long as a year.
- Other new therapies are currently undergoing study.

### MEDICATIONS

Injection of corticosteroid drugs directly into the keloid. May be repeated every 3 to 4 weeks until desired degree of flattening and softening has been achieved.

### ACTIVITY

No limits.

### DIET

No special diet.



## NOTIFY OUR OFFICE IF

- You or a family member has signs of keloids.
- Keloids recur after treatment.

Special notes:

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More notes on the back of this page