



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

[Home](#) | [Skin lesions](#)

## Lentigo simplex

### What is lentigo simplex?

---

Lentigo simplex is the most common form of [lentigo](#). A single lesion or multiple lesions (lentigines) may be present at birth or more commonly first develop in early childhood. Lentigo simplex is not induced by sun exposure, and it is not associated with any medical diseases or conditions. It is also referred to as simple lentigo and juvenile lentigo.

### What are the clinical features of lentigo simplex?

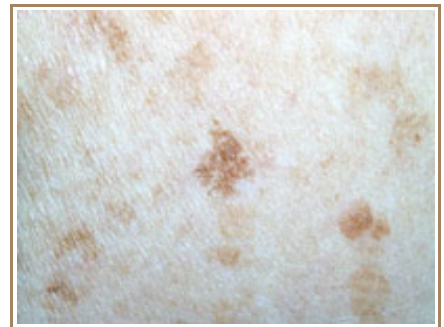
---

Lentigo simplex lesions may occur anywhere on the skin or mucous membranes. Only a few lesions may develop initially, but over time up until adult life they may become more numerous. Rarely, lesions may erupt suddenly or occur in vast numbers. Lesions appear as:

- Round or oval shaped macule (flat spot or patch) 3–15mm in diameter
- Margin or edge of the macule can be jagged or smooth
- A single even colour ranging from light brown to black
- Lesions are symptomless, i.e.: not painful or itchy

Lentigo simplex lesions are distinguished from [freckles](#) by their darker colour, comparative sparseness and scattered distribution. They also do not darken or increase in number on sun exposure, as do freckles.

#### Lentigo simplex



### What causes lentigo simplex?

---

The cause of lentigo simplex is unknown. Multiple lentigines can occur without associated conditions, in which case the condition is referred to as lentigines profusa or generalised lentigines. When multiple lentigines occur with associated abnormalities, the condition forms its own disease entity. These include [Peutz-Jeghers syndrome](#), [Xeroderma pigmentosum](#), LAMB syndrome, [LEOPARD syndrome](#) and [Carney's complex](#).

### What treatments are available?

---

Lentigo simplex lesions are benign (non-cancerous) lesions that cause no harm. However, their appearance is

sometimes similar to melanomas or other cancerous lesions so they need to be examined carefully. Also, the presence or development of multiple lentigines may indicate the presence of associated abnormalities. Sometimes these defects may not show up clinically for many years, so a patient with lentigines should be followed up for long periods.

In some patients, the lesions may fade or disappear spontaneously over the course of years. If necessary, lentigines can be removed permanently through the use of [chemical peels](#), [cryotherapy](#), [laser treatments](#) or simple [surgical excision](#).

#### Related information

---

##### References:

- Book: Textbook of Dermatology. Ed Rook A, Wilkinson DS, Ebling FJB, Champion RH, Burton JL. Fourth edition. Blackwell Scientific Publications.

##### On DermNet NZ:

- [Lentigines](#)
- [Brown spots and freckles](#)
- [Melanoma](#)
- [Moles](#)
- [Mole mapping](#)

##### Other websites:

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

##### Books about skin diseases:

See the [DermNet NZ bookstore](#)

**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.

Created 2006. Last updated 26 Dec 2006. © 2007 NZDS. Disclaimer.