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Granuloma faciale

What is granuloma faciale?

Granuloma faciale is a rare, non-cancerous skin disorder that is characterised by single or multiple papules, plaques or nodules, most often occurring on the face. The term "granuloma" refers to a particular kind of inflammation found on microscopic examination of the lesion, but funnily enough granulomas are not seen in granuloma faciale!

Who gets granuloma faciale?

Granuloma faciale most often affects healthy middle-aged white men, although it has been found in males and females of all races and ages.

What are the signs and symptoms of granuloma faciale?

Patients most often present to their doctor after noticing a spot or lesion on their face that then multiplies in number over several weeks or months. These lesions are usually:

- Varied in colour: skin coloured, reddish-brown, blue or purple
- Varied in size from a few millimetres to several centimetres
- Elevated and soft
- Prominent follicles (pores)
- Defined with a border
- On the face, although similar lesions have been found on other parts of the body such as the scalp, trunk and extremities

Granuloma faciale is usually symptomless. Some patients may complain of tender, itching or stinging lesions.

Granuloma faciale



What causes granuloma faciale?

Why granuloma faciale occurs remains unknown but sun exposure has been implicated:

- Lesions appear more often on sun-exposed areas
- Lesions darken when exposed to sun

Diagnosis is confirmed by [skin biopsy](#) and is often necessary to rule out other skin diseases that have similar appearance. Granuloma faciale is characterised by inflammatory cells in the dermis including eosinophils (allergy

cells) and [vasculitis](#) (inflamed blood vessels).

Skin conditions that may appear similar include [sarcoidosis](#), [cutaneous lupus erythematosus](#), [polymorphous light eruption](#), [Jessner lymphocytic infiltration](#), [lymphocytoma cutis](#), [mycosis fungoides](#), insect bite reaction and [fixed drug eruption](#).

Treatment of granuloma faciale

Granuloma faciale is a chronic condition with exacerbations and remissions. Spontaneous resolution rarely occurs. The disease appears not to have any relationship to internal disease and treatment is mainly to improve the appearance. Various medical and surgical therapies have been used but none have been consistently successful. Granuloma faciale also has the tendency to recur after treatment.

Medical therapies used with varying results include:

- [Topical steroids](#)
- Corticosteroid injections
- [Dapsone](#)
- Antimalarial tablets ([hydroxychloroquine](#))
- Topical psoralen UV-A ([PUVA](#))
- Radiation therapy

Surgical therapy may also be used. Results are variable and may leave scarring.

- Surgical [excision](#)
- [Dermabrasion](#)
- Carbon dioxide laser
- [Electrosurgery](#)
- [Cryotherapy](#)
- 585 nm pulsed-dye laser

Related information

References:

On DermNet NZ:

- [Facial skin lesions](#)

Other websites:

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

Books:

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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