



Pityriasis Alba

Pityriasis Alba is characterized by dry, white, scaly patches on the skin. Children with this extremely common condition develop uneven, round, or oval patches after sun exposure. They are most common on the face (cheeks), neck, upper trunk, and arms.

Pityriasis Alba is completely benign and is a mild form of eczema. Because the dry areas of skin become slightly inflamed, these areas don't tan the way the normal skin does. Treatment involves daily use of a good moisturizer, especially whenever the skin gets wet. Sometimes mild topical steroid creams (such as hydrocortisone) can help. Even with no treatment at all, these spots will disappear on their own although it may take several months to years. Some children get Pityriasis Alba every summer during childhood. The topical steroid is only helpful for the scaling and inflammation. It should not be used on spots that are no longer rough, scaly, or dry, even if the color remains white.

Even when the dryness and scaling is effectively treated, the white discoloration will remain for a while. At least several weeks must pass for the treated skin to return to its normal color.