

Cutaneous infections that manifest in papules, plaques, and patches

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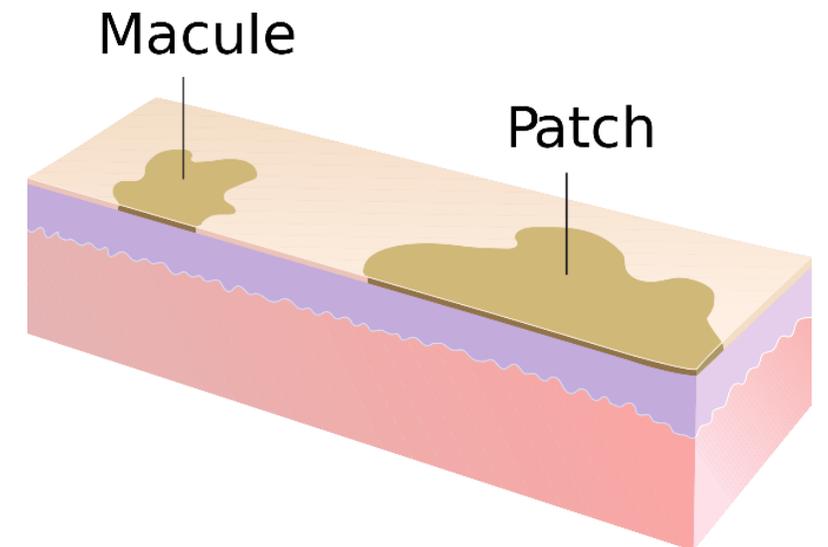
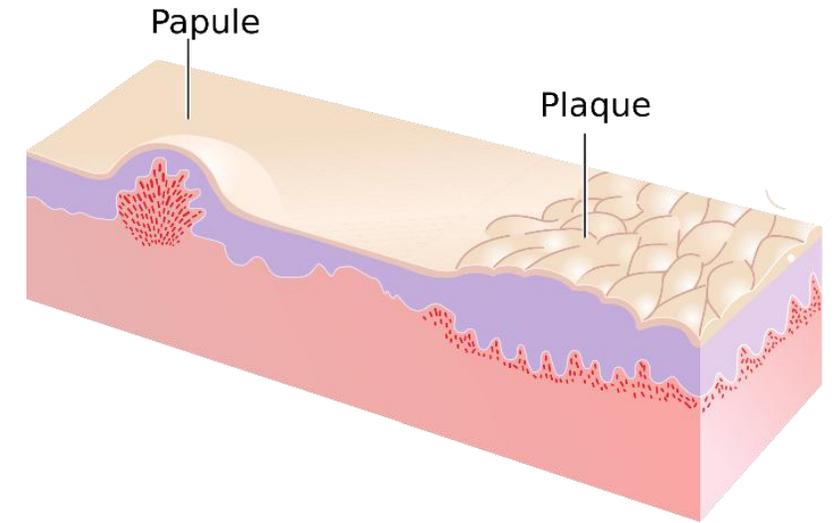
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Outline

- Pityriasis versicolor
- Cutaneous candidiasis
- Dermatophytoses
- Erythrasma
- Cellulitis
- Erysipelas
- Subcutaneous necrotizing infections
- Tinea nigra
- Lyme disease
- Kaposi sarcoma
- MCC
- Molluscum contagiosum
- Condyloma lata
- Common warts
- Blastomycosis
- Piedra

Overview

- Papules are raised palpable lesions that are usually less than 1 cm in diameter.
- Plaques (nodules) are **raised** palpable lesions larger than 1 cm in diameter and are frequently formed by a confluence of many papules.
- Patches are **flat**, non-palpable lesions larger than 1 cm in diameter.



Hypo-/hyper-pigmented patches: Pityriasis versicolor

- **Pityriasis versicolor** (tinea versicolor) is a common cutaneous fungal infection of the keratinized epithelial cells in the stratum corneum.
- It is caused by *Malassezia furfur*, a dimorphic lipophilic fungus, which is a commensal present on the skin of most humans.
- Superficial hyper- or hypopigmented macules or **patches** appear mostly on the chest or back.



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Pityriasis versicolor



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Pityriasis versicolor – Epidemiology

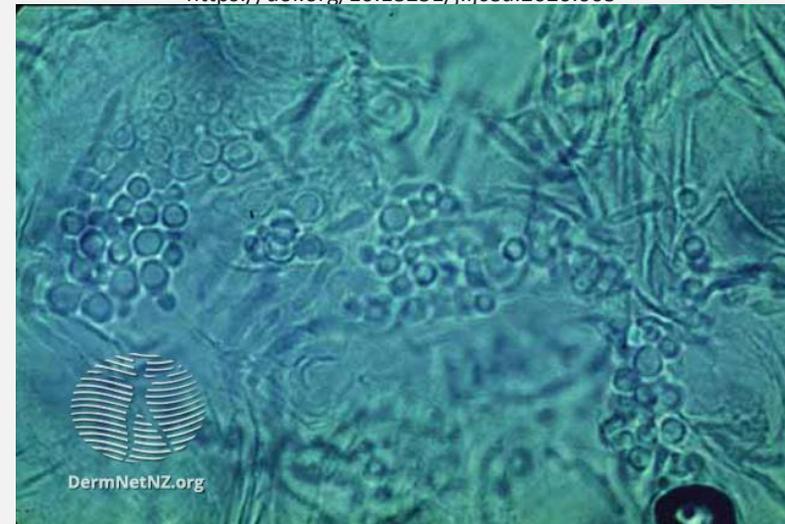
- *M. furfur* is normal flora on the skin in 90–100% of adults.
- The prevalence of pityriasis versicolor is 2–8% and it is common in young adults.
- Higher predisposition to pityriasis versicolor is seen in warm moist climates and among pregnant women or those with immunodeficiency states (e.g., HIV infection, diabetes).
- Fungal growth on skin is facilitated by higher temperatures and humidity.

Pityriasis versicolor – Diagnosis

- Diagnosis of pityriasis versicolor is based on the clinical examination of the lesions.
- **A Wood lamp** (produces a peak wavelength of 365nm) can be used to demonstrate white, pale yellow to orange fluorescence due to pityrialactone by *M. furfur*.
- Skin scrapings clarified with 10% KOH and stained with methylene blue may show round budding yeast cells and short fat hyphae described as “**spaghetti and meatballs**”.



Credit: Arumugakani V et al.
<https://doi.org/10.18231/j.ijced.2020.063>



Credit: DermNet.
<https://dermnetnz.org/topics/pityriasis-versicolor>

Pityriasis versicolor – Treatment

- Topical agents used to treat pityriasis versicolor include selenium sulfide, sodium sulfacetamide, and ciclopiroxolamine.
- Systemic treatment with ketoconazole, fluconazole, or itraconazole are also effective.
- There is a high recurrence rate.

Erythematous patches/plaques: Cutaneous Candidiasis

- *Candida* spp. is a fungal commensal of the skin and can overgrow, causing infections of the skin and mucous membranes.
- Infections of the skin are common in immunocompetent persons and even more common among immunocompromised patients.
- The most common cause of cutaneous candidiasis is *C. albicans*. Others are *glabrata*, *parapsilosis*, *tropicalis*, *krusei*.



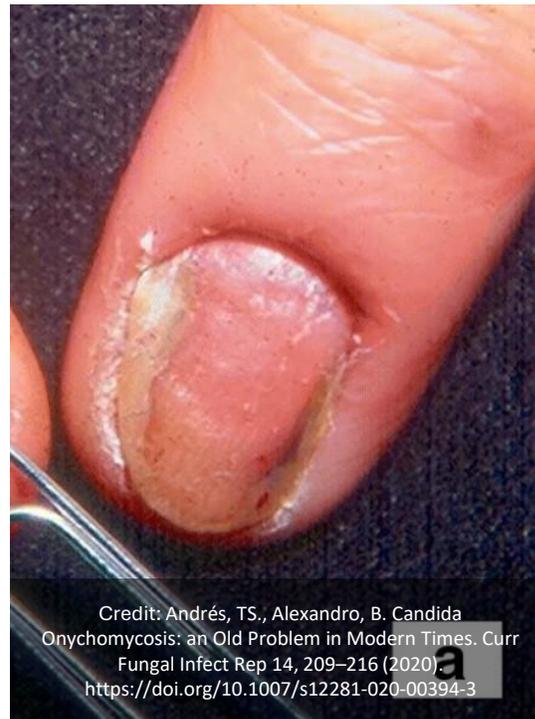
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Cutaneous Candidiasis – Clinical Manifestations

- Red patches/plaques are usually found in the groin, axillae, vagina, mouth, angle of the mouth, glans penis, and inframammary and obesity folds.
- Common conditions are **diaper rash**, **oral thrush**, and **perlèche**. Nails can be affected as well (*Candida onychomycosis*). Thrush is an infection of the mucous membranes, which become red and covered with a creamy-white, loosely adherent pseudomembrane.
- Perlèche fissures occur at **angles of the mouth**.

Cutaneous Candidiasis – Clinical Manifestations

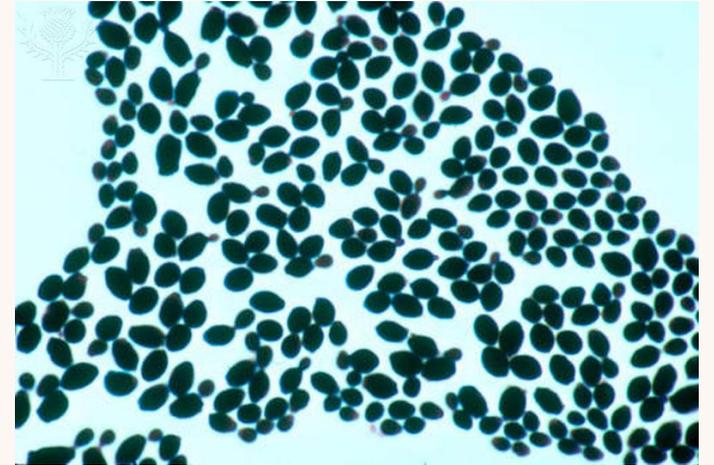


Cutaneous Candidiasis – Epidemiology & Pathogenesis

- Immunocompromised patients, diapered infants, and patients who are pregnant, obese, or immobile are at increased risk of developing cutaneous candidiasis.
- *C. albicans* is normal flora of the skin in up to 50% of the general population.
- Predisposing factors can allow overgrowth of this organism, resulting in clinical manifestations.
- Cutaneous candidiasis infection is usually limited to the stratum corneum.

Cutaneous Candidiasis – Diagnosis

- Wet mounts in 10% KOH show budding yeast and pseudohyphae.
- Only *C. albicans* and *C. dubliniensis* produce germ tubes in medium containing serum.
- *Candida* can be cultured on Sabouraud agar.
- Species identification can be done using chromogenic agar.
- Lesions do NOT fluoresce when exposed to a Wood lamp.



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Cutaneous Candidiasis – Treatment and Prevention

- Topical treatment with antifungal creams containing nystatin or miconazole may be helpful.
- If topical treatment fails, treatment with systemic ketoconazole may eliminate the disease.
- It is important to prevent skin abrasions and to keep the area dry.

Erythematous plaques: Tinea (Dermatophytoses)

- Dermatophytoses are superficial fungal skin infections that can occur on every part of the body. This includes tinea capitis (head), tinea corporis (body), tinea cruris (groin), tinea pedis (foot), tinea manus (hand), tinea barbae (beard), and tinea unguium, or onychomycosis (nail).
- *Microsporum*, *Trichophyton*, and *Epidermophyton* (collectively called the dermatophytes) are the most common causes of dermatophytoses.
- Tinea lesions start as pruritic erythematous macules that become with scaling or vesicles.
- If the infection involves the scalp, hair loss is common (alopecia).

Tinea capitis

- Fungal infection of the scalp.
- Infections of the hair frequently result in broken hair and alopecia.



Tinea corporis

Erythematous plaques with central clearing and elevated borders on the trunk.



Credit: Alan L. Detrick
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Tinea cruris

Plaques present on the groin and perineum.



Tinea pedis

- The most common of all dermatophytoses.
- Results in fissured toe webs, inflamed soles, or thick friable toenails.



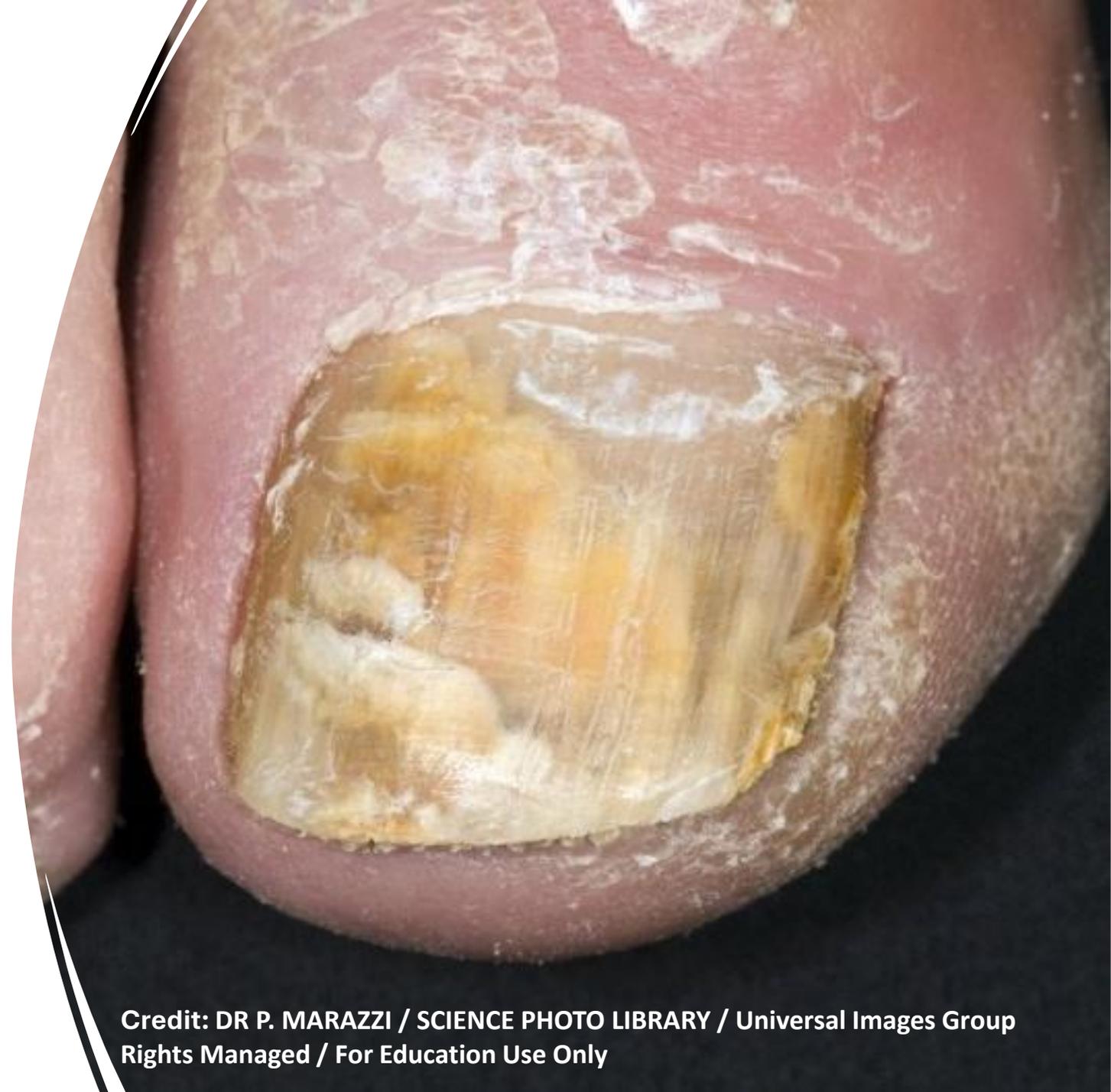
Tinea manuum

Inflamed scaly hands.



Tinea unguium (onychomycosis)

- Brown discoloration at the edge of the nails.
- Nails become soft, thick, and irregular and separate from the nail bed.
- Tinea unguium usually results from untreated tinea pedis or tinea manuum.



Tinea (Dermatophytoses) – Epidemiology

- Dermatophytoses affect about 20–25% of the global population.
- **The most common dermatophyte infection is tinea pedis.**
- Tinea capitis is common in children.
- Tinea capitis, tinea pedis, and tinea cruris are more common in men than in women.
- Tinea unguium on the fingernails is more common in women; however, the same infection on the toenails is more common in men.

Tinea (Dermatophytoses) – Epidemiology

- Conditions predisposing to dermatophytoses include moist environments and impaired cell-mediated immunity.
- Dermatophytes are transmitted from human to human (**anthropophilic** such as *T. tonsurans*, *E. floccosum*), from - animals (**zoophilic** such as *M. canis*), or from soil (**geophilic** such as *M. gypseum*).
- Infections from zoophilic and geophilic dermatophytes are more severe than anthropophilic dermatophytoses.



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Tinea (Dermatophytoses) – Diagnosis

- Diagnosis of dermatophytoses is based on clinical appearance.
- Most lesions do **NOT** fluoresce when examined with a Wood lamp.
- A scraping of the lesions followed by 10% KOH treatment is helpful.
- Scrapings from the lesions are cultured on Sabouraud agar.
- Cultures are incubated at room temperature, with **growth observed within 7–14 days.**



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Tinea (Dermatophytoses) – Treatment and Prevention

- Antifungal agents such as terbinafine, clotrimazole, itraconazole, or fluconazole are helpful.
- Avoid environments where there is chronic moisture, areas with many spores (e.g., shower-room floors), and avoid wearing tight clothing.

Erythematous plaques: Erythrasma

- **Erythrasma** is a bacterial infection of the skin folds under the arms, in the groin and between the toes that is similar in appearance to tinea cruris and diaper rash.
- Differences in the fluorescence of the lesions following examination with a Wood lamp help in determining if the infection is erythrasma (**coral-red fluorescence**), tinea or diaper rash (no fluorescence).



RP, Smith MA, Mayeaux EJ, Chumley HS: *The Color Atlas of Dermatology*, Second Edition: www.accessmedicine.com
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Credit: Courtesy of Richard P. Usatine, MD.,
<https://basicmedicalkey.com/erythrasma/>

Erythematous plaques: Erythrasma

- Erythrasma is caused by a bacterium that is part of the normal flora called *Corynebacterium minutissimum*.
- The lesions of erythrasma are brown to red-brown well-defined patches/plaques, which may have fine scales.
- Lesions are usually observed on the inner thighs, crural region, scrotum, and toe webs. The axillae, sub-mammary area, peri-umbilical region, and inter-gluteal fold can be affected but are less commonly reported.

Erythrasma – Epidemiology/Pathogenesis

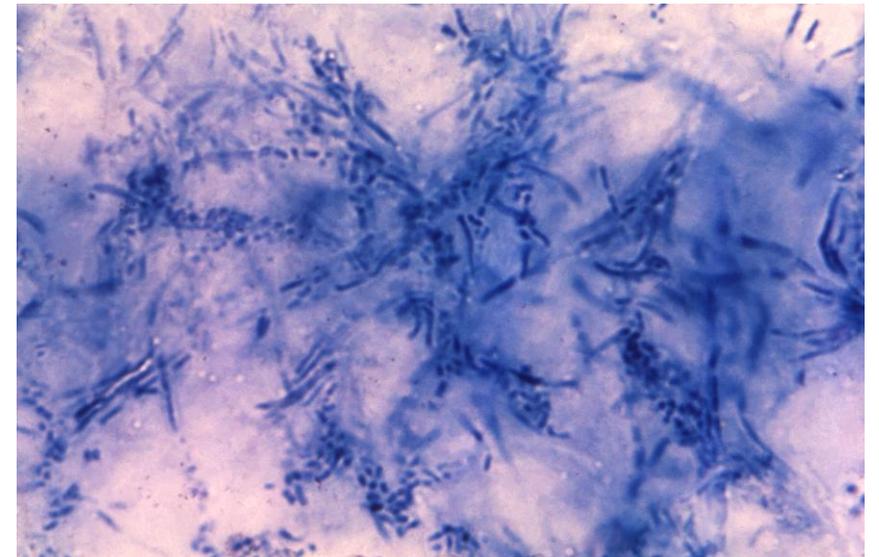
- Predisposing factors include excessive sweating, obesity, diabetes mellitus, and other immunocompromised states.
- In patients with erythrasma, the bacteria invade the upper third of the stratum corneum and multiply in hot humid environments.
- The stratum corneum thickens, and the organisms can be seen in the intercellular spaces as well as within cells. *C. minutissimum* can dissolve keratin.

Erythrasma – Diagnosis

- The **coral-red** fluorescence seen when lesions are examined by Wood lamp is secondary to the production of porphyrin by bacteria.
- Skin scraping reveals **gram-positive rods**.
- The skin scrapings also can be cultured to identify the organism.



Credit: Tanya & Philip.
<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/9zh116s1>



Credit: CDC public health image library.
<https://phil.cdc.gov/Details.aspx?pid=21834>

Erythrasma – Treatment and Prevention

- Erythrasma can be treated with topical antibiotic such as fusidic acid cream and clindamycin solution.
- Extensive infections can be treated with oral erythromycin or tetracycline.
- To prevent recurrences, patients should be encouraged to improve hygiene and keep the area dry.

Erythematous plaques: Cellulitis

- Cellulitis is an acute infection of the dermis and subcutaneous tissues caused by different bacteria.
- *S. pyogenes* and *S. aureus* are common causes of cellulitis commonly seen in association with wounds or in burn patients. *Streptococci* groups B, C, D, and G are less common causes of cellulitis. *S. pneumoniae* can cause cellulitis in certain groups (DM, SLE, drug users, patients with hematologic disorders).
- Gram-negative bacilli (e.g., *E. coli*, *P. aeruginosa*) cause cellulitis resulting in foot ulcers in DM patients. *P. aeruginosa* cellulitis and osteomyelitis often occur following trauma to the foot. *P. aeruginosa* cellulitis is also common in burn patients.
- *Pasteurella multocida* cellulitis is associated with **dog or cat bites**.

Cellulitis – Clinical Manifestations

- Acute inflammation is seen within the subcutaneous tissues. **The borders of the lesions are usually indistinct.**
- Vesicles and bullae may develop and rupture, occasionally with necrosis of the involved skin. Associated red streaking is characteristic of ascending lymphangitis.
- Manifestations include regional lymphadenopathy, fever, malaise, preceding the cutaneous findings by a few hours.



Cellulitis – Epidemiology

- Cellulitis is most common in the lower extremities.
- Conditions that predispose patients to increased risk of developing serious or rapidly spreading cellulitis include DM, immunodeficiency (e.g., chronic steroid use), varicella.
- Skin trauma, ulceration, and edematous tissue, usually precedes cellulitis.
- Cellulitis following infection with gram-negative rods is more common in immunocompromised hosts.



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Cellulitis – Pathogenesis

- A diffuse infection occurs due to various virulence factors released by the bacteria such as streptokinase, DNase, and hyaluronidase.
- Cellulitis extends deeper into skin than does erysipelas and may result in osteomyelitis.
- Cellulitis results in serious systemic illness by uncontrolled spread to contiguous tissues, to the lymphatics, or to the bloodstream.

Cellulitis – Diagnosis, Treatment, and Prevention

- Diagnosis of cellulitis is based on clinical findings.
- Culture and AST can be useful. Results of blood cultures are often positive.
- Serologic tests, especially a rising anti-DNase B titer, confirm a streptococcal cause.
- Oral or parenteral antibiotics are frequently used to treat patients with mild cellulitis.
- Patients with severe cellulitis must be admitted to the hospital and treated with IV antibiotics. Empiric antimicrobial agent coverage for *S. pyogenes* and *S. aureus* should be given.

Erythematous plaques: Erysipelas

- Erysipelas is a superficial bacterial infection that extends into the cutaneous lymphatics.
- Most cases are due to streptococci, with *S. pyogenes* present in about two thirds of cases, and group G streptococci in a third of cases.
- The lesions are raised and **well demarcated**.



Erysipelas – Epidemiology/Pathogenesis

- The highest incidence of erysipelas occurs in patients aged 60 to 80 years.
- Erysipelas lesions are most seen on the legs (in about 85% of cases), and the next most common location is the face.
- Erysipelas is more commonly seen in patients who are immunocompromised and those with lymphedema.
- The bacteria are initially inoculated into an area of skin trauma. The source of the bacteria is usually from the host nasopharynx.

Erysipelas – Diagnosis, Treatment, and Prevention

- Blood, wound, and nasopharyngeal samples should be obtained and cultured.
- Elevation and rest of the affected limb are recommended to reduce local swelling and inflammation.
- Treatment includes oral or intramuscular injection of antibiotics such as penicillin, erythromycin, or azithromycin.
- Following treatment, the lesion usually desquamates but can resolve with pigmentary changes that may resolve over time.

Erythematous plaques: Subcutaneous necrotizing infections

- Subcutaneous necrotizing infections cause extensive destruction of the subcutaneous tissues and fascia, and some also cause extensive necrosis of the muscles.
- Diseases include necrotizing fasciitis, non-clostridial anaerobic cellulitis, clostridial myonecrosis (gas gangrene), Fournier gangrene.
- The etiologic agents include: ***S. pyogenes*** (the most common cause of necrotizing fasciitis), ***S. aureus***, anaerobes, ***Enterobacteriaceae***, ***Clostridium perfringens*** (the common cause of gas gangrene), among other ***Clostridium spp.***

Subcutaneous necrotizing infections – Clinical Manifestations

- Subcutaneous edema and necrosis are seen.
- With progression, violaceous discoloration and bullae, crepitus, palpable gas in tissues, and dermal gangrene may develop.
- When male genitalia are involved, the disease is called **Fournier gangrene**.



Credit: Benjamin.
<https://www.gssrr.org/index.php/JournalOfBasicAndApplied/article/view/10393>

Subcutaneous necrotizing infections – Epidemiology

- The mortality rate with treatment is 20–30%.
- The most common site of involvement is an extremity and may occur from infected cutaneous ulcers or infectious complications of previous injury.
- The second most common site of involvement is the perineum, which is usually a complication of prior surgery.
- DM predisposes patients to subcutaneous necrotizing disease.

Subcutaneous necrotizing infections – Pathogenesis

- Infection extends into the subcutaneous tissue following trauma.
- Occlusion of small subcutaneous vessels, arterioles and venules leads to tissue ischemia and dermal gangrene.
- Ischemia, edema, and inflammation in the subcutaneous tissue decrease O_2 and permit growth of obligate anaerobes while promoting anaerobic metabolism by facultative organisms.
- Anaerobic metabolism often produces hydrogen and nitrogen, relatively insoluble gases that may accumulate in subcutaneous tissues and cause **crepitus**.

Subcutaneous necrotizing infections – Diagnosis

- **The disease is an emergency.**
Differentiation of cellulitis from clostridial gas gangrene is critical to proper management.
- X-rays of the affected area often show soft tissue gas.
- Rapid progression of tissue damage requires surgical exploration.
- Pus aspirated into a syringe percutaneously or during surgery provides the most suitable material for Gram stain and aerobic and anaerobic cultures.



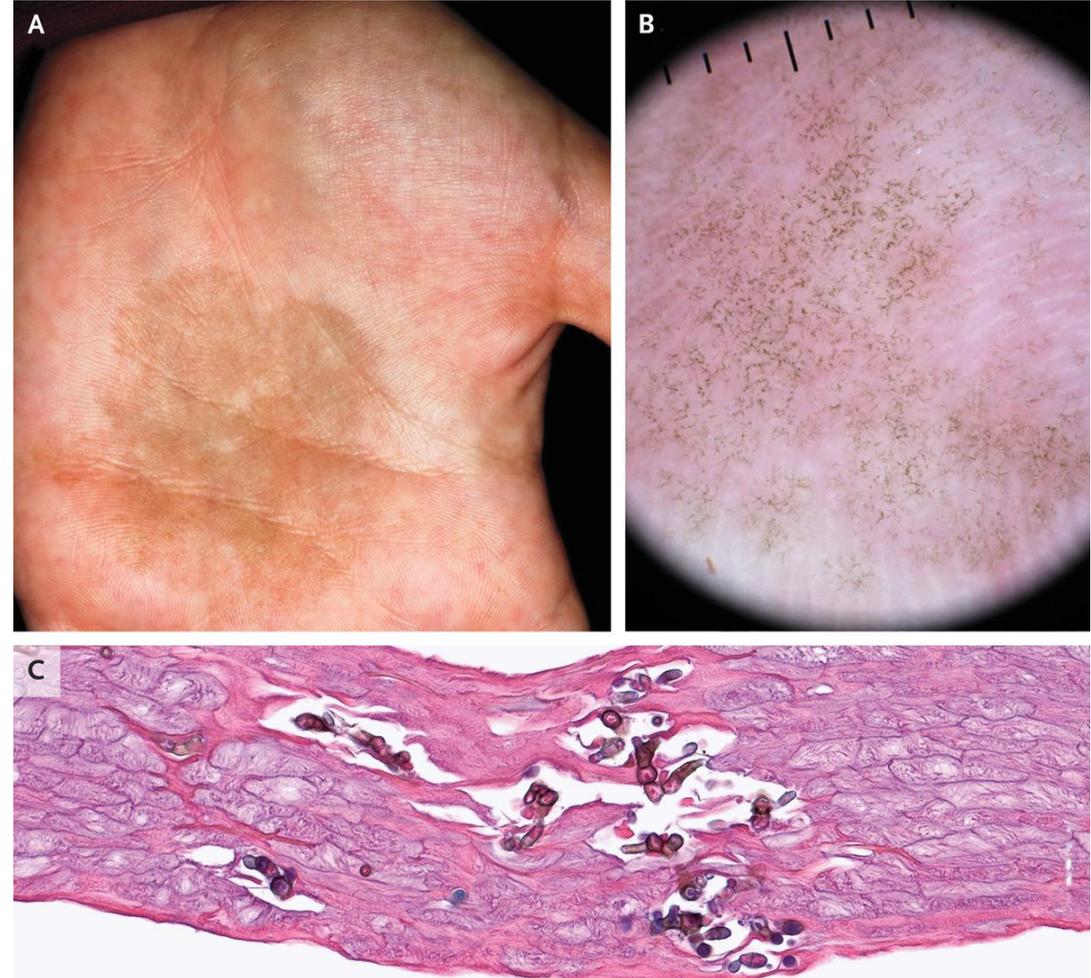
Credit: Bakhshi et al: <http://dx.doi.org/10.18203/2349-2902.isj20203816>

Subcutaneous necrotizing infections – Treatment and Prevention

- Gentamicin combined with clindamycin, or ceftazidime or imipenem alone is appropriate treatment of subcutaneous necrotizing infections pending results of cultures.
- Therapy involves incision and extensive debridement.
- Hyperbaric oxygen therapy is also used.
- Prevention involves proper care of wounds and trauma sites.

Patches: Tinea nigra

- Tinea nigra is a superficial infection of the stratum corneum caused by the dematiaceous fungus *Hortaea werneckii*.
- The lesions are dark patches often on the palm.
- Microscopic examination of skin scrapings shows branched, septate hyphae and budding yeast cells with melanized cell walls.
- Tinea nigra will respond to treatment with keratolytic solutions, salicylic acid, or azole antifungal drugs.



Nodules: Lyme disease

- **Lyme disease is the most common tick-borne illness in the US.**
- Lyme disease is caused by the spirochete *Borrelia burgdorferi*.
- Within 3–30 days after a patient experiences a tick bite, a red macule will appear at the site.
- **The macule expands radially as a nodele with central clearing and swelling (erythema migrans).**
- Other manifestations are variable and include a flu-like syndrome consisting of malaise, fatigue, chills, fever, headache, stiff neck, myalgias, and arthralgias.



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Nodules: Kaposi Sarcoma

- Kaposi sarcoma due to HHV-8 (Kaposi sarcoma herpesvirus) occurs in patients with immunosuppression (e.g., AIDS).
- Kaposi sarcoma is a vascular lesion presenting as a violaceous **pink to purple plaque/nodule** on the skin or mucocutaneous surfaces.
- Patients with HIV-related Kaposi sarcoma respond well to HAART.



Nodules: Merkel cell carcinoma

- Merkel cell carcinoma (MCC) is a rare, very aggressive skin cancer with a high mortality rate and a high tendency of metastatic spread.
- The global incidence of MCC ranges from 0.1 to 1.6 cases per 100,000 people per year.
- MCC is manifested by a rapidly growing, painless, **erythematous/violaceous nodule or plaque**.
- The acronym AEIOU captures these features: A = asymptomatic, E = expanding rapidly, I = immune suppression, O = older than 50 years of age and U=UV-exposed site.



Smooth papules: Molluscum contagiosum

- Molluscum contagiosum is a viral infection that produces papules with a central depression (**umbilicated lesions**).
- Molluscum contagiosum virus (MCV) is a large DNA poxvirus.
- The lesions are flesh-colored, dome-shaped papules 2–10 mm in diameter. The center of the lesion is depressed (umbilicated).
- Lesions can appear anywhere on the body, including the mucous membranes.
- Lesions are widespread and persistent in AIDS patients.
- The disease is self-limiting in patients with a normally functioning immune system; however, lesions can remain for years.

Smooth papules: Molluscum contagiosum

- Most infections occur in children and result from direct skin-to-skin contact or by contact with contaminated fomites (on bath towels, sponges, and gymnasium equipment).
- Molluscum contagiosum is usually a sexually transmitted infection in healthy adults. Few lesions are present and are usually limited to the genitalia, lower abdomen, or buttocks.

Molluscum contagiosum – Diagnosis, Treatment, and Prevention

- Diagnosis is based on the **distinctive central umbilication of the dome-shaped lesions**. PCR can also be used.
- Without treatment, molluscum contagiosum lesions will heal within several months or years.
- To prevent autoinoculation or transmission to close contacts, therapy may be beneficial and includes topical (e.g., podophyllin, trichloroacetic acid, cryotherapy with liquid nitrogen).
- In immunocompromised patients, improvement of lesions can be observed following treatment with intravenous and topical ritonavir, cidofovir, zidovudine, or intralesional interferon alpha.
- To prevent spread, contact with infected persons should be avoided

Smooth papules: Condyloma lata

- Condyloma lata are peri-mucosal skin papules in secondary syphilis.
- The lesions are pink or gray papules that occur at the mucocutaneous junctions and in moist or intertriginous areas of the skin.
- The lesions are infectious.
- Lesions of condyloma lata appear 6–8 weeks after the appearance of the primary chancre.
- The disease is usually acquired by unprotected sexual contact with an infected individual.

Smooth papules: Condyloma lata

- Lesions are similar to and frequently misdiagnosed as condyloma acuminata.
- Condyloma lata are smoother and softer than the rough and hard condyloma acuminatum lesions.
- Condyloma lata are treated with benzathine penicillin.
- Intimate contact with infected persons and with the lesions should be avoided.

Verrucous lesions: Warts

- Common infection by HPV. Lesions can occur anywhere in the skin and on mucous membranes. Over 100 different types of HPV have been identified as agents of human infection.
- **Common warts (verruca vulgaris)** are hyperkeratotic papules with a rough irregular surface and range from less than 1 mm to larger than 1 cm. They can occur on any part of the body.
- Lesions are usually caused by HPV-2 and HPV-4 (most common), followed by types 1, 3, 27, 29, and 57.



Warts: Clinical Manifestations

- Flat (plane) warts, are flat or slightly elevated flesh-colored papules that may be smooth or slightly hyperkeratotic and range in size from 1–5 mm.
- Lesions may appear in a linear distribution because of trauma (**Koebner phenomenon**).
- Flat warts can occur anywhere; however, the face, hands, and shins are the most affected areas.
- HPV types 3, 10, and 28 usually cause these lesions.



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Warts: Clinical Manifestations

- Deep palmo-plantar warts occur on the soles of the feet (plantar surface) and are commonly found on weight-bearing areas (e.g., metatarsal head and heel).
- Lesions are usually caused by HPV type 1 (most common), followed by types 2, 3, 4, 27, 29, and 57.
- Anogenital warts (condyloma acuminata) are papules or nodules of the genitalia, perineum, crural folds, penile shaft, anus, and rectum.
- About 30 different HPV types are known to cause genital warts with types 6 and 11 being the most common.

Warts: Epidemiology

- Warts are common worldwide and are estimated to affect about 10% of the population.
- About 10% of the general population is infected by genital HPV at some point during their lifetime.
- The HPV viruses can resist desiccation, freezing, and prolonged storage outside host cells (non-enveloped virus).
- Most cases of HPV are transmitted by direct or indirect contact.
- **Anogenital warts are the most common sexually transmitted infection worldwide.**

Warts: Pathogenesis

- The HPV virus infects the basal epidermal cells. As the cells differentiate and move to the surface, the virus becomes active and induces epidermal proliferation. Many warts resolve spontaneously within a few years. Cell-mediated immunity plays a significant role in wart regression.
- Many anogenital warts are benign. Some anogenital infections that are caused by HPV and are more likely to be malignant usually do not produce the wart-like lesion.
- HPV types 16, 18, 31, and 33 (16 and 18 are the most common) are commonly associated with anogenital malignancy.

Warts: Diagnosis, Treatment, and Prevention

- The diagnosis of warts is based on clinical findings. PCR can be used to detect viral DNA.
- Treatment of warts can be difficult with recurrences. Treatment include application of topical agents such as salicylic acid and podophyllin and treatments with cryosurgery, lasers, and surgical excision. Most common warts usually disappear within 2 years without treatment. Contact with lesions should be avoided.
- Three HPV vaccines: nona-valent HPV vaccine (Gardasil 9), quadrivalent (Gardasil), and bivalent (Cervarix) have been licensed. The nona-valent vaccine protects against nine types (6, 11, 16, 18, 31, 33, 45, 52, and 58).
- HPV vaccine is recommended for routine vaccination at age 11 or 12 years.

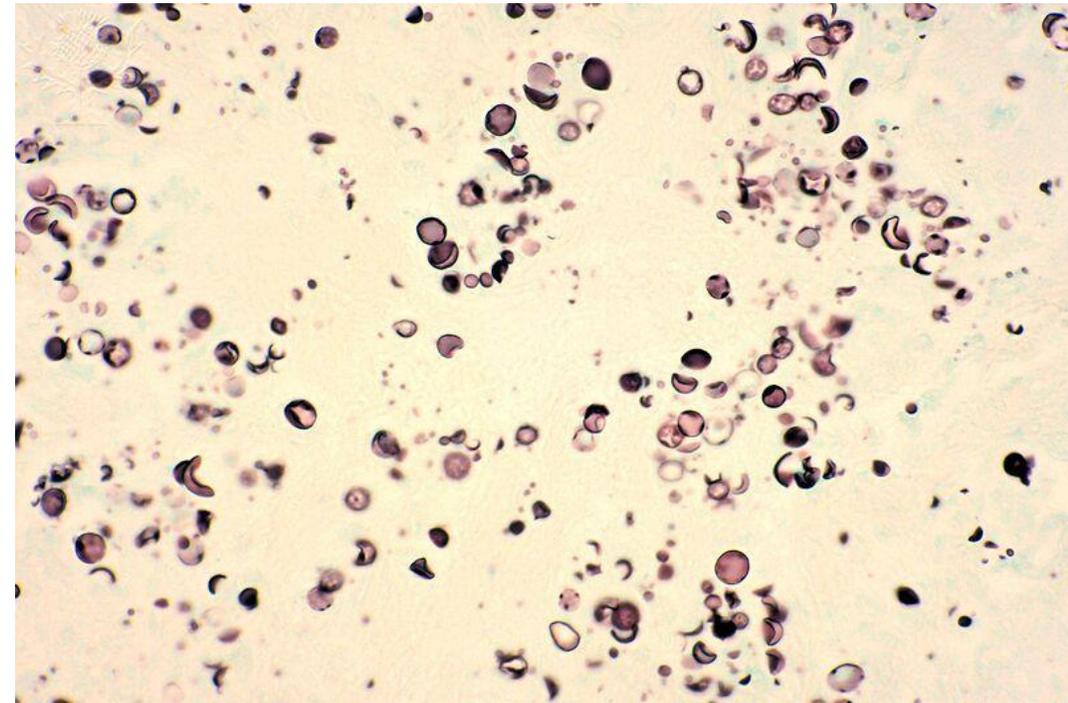


Verrucous lesions: Blastomycosis

- *Blastomyces dermatitidis* is a dimorphic fungus. Organisms grown at 37°C are in the yeast phase. At room temperature, the organism becomes a mold.
- An infection of the lungs precedes the appearance of the skin lesions in patients diagnosed with blastomycosis, with skin lesions occurring in about 25% of patients.
- A fully developed lesion appears as an **elevated purplish red verrucous patch**.

Blastomycosis: Diagnosis, Treatment, and Prevention

- Culture provides definitive diagnosis. Identification is aided by microscopy of sputum, pus, or urine specimens showing characteristic thick-walled unencapsulated yeasts (8–15 μm) with **broad-based buds**.
- Amphotericin B is used to treat blastomycosis.
- Prevention by avoiding certain recreational activities that would increase their risk of exposure.



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Hair nodules: Piedra

- Black piedra is a nodular infection of the hair shaft caused by *Piedraia hortae*.
- White piedra, due to infection with *Trichosporon* species, presents as larger, softer, yellowish nodules on the hairs.
- Axillary, pubic, beard, and scalp hair may be infected. Treatment for both types consists of removal of the infected hair and application of a topical antifungal agent. Piedra is endemic in tropical countries.
- Shaving the infected hair is curative.

Hair nodules: Piedra



Gaurav V, Grover C, Das S, Rai G. White Piedra: An Uncommon Superficial Fungal Infection of Hair. *Skin Appendage Disord.* 2022 Jan;8(1):34-37. doi: 10.1159/000517807.



Khatu SS, Poojary SA, Nagpur NG. Nodules on the hair: a rare case of mixed piedra. *Int J Trichology.* 2013 Oct;5(4):220-3. doi: 10.4103/0974-7753.130421.

Thanks for listening!