

ACNE KELOIDALIS NUCHAE



Acne keloidalis nuchae (AKN) is a chronic inflammatory condition characterised by the formation of small growths at the back of the head and neck region. It usually starts in the early 20's and can increase in number with time. At times the growths can fuse with each other to form large scar areas (keloid- see picture above). This leads to permanent hair loss, thick scars and low self-esteem for the affected person. AKN is much more common in African people with tightly-curved hair, however it can also occur in other races, due to the use of certain medications (e.g. Cyclosporin).

Causes:

- a) Shaving of tightly curled hairs resulting in the emerging hair curling back into the skin. This can lead to inflammation and scars.
- b) Constant irritation with the shirt collars, chronic infection of the hair roots and any other causes of irritation of the scalp

TREATMENT OPTIONS

1. Prevention of lesions - stop irritation of the scalp and stop-shaving the scalp
2. Tretinoin gel and corticosteroid
3. Intralesional steroids
4. Cryotherapy regime
5. Antibiotics use for infections
6. Punch excision
7. Laser hair reduction and scar reduction
8. Surgical excision and repair

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