

Bowen disease is a rare skin disorder. Affected individuals develop a slow-growing, reddish scaly patch or plaque on the skin. Sun exposed areas of the skin are most often affected. Bowen disease only affects the outermost layer of the skin (epidermis). Lesions are usually not painful or may not be associated with any symptoms (asymptomatic). In most cases, treatment is highly successful. Bowen disease is considered a pre-cancerous condition, although the risk of developing skin cancer is less than 10 percent. The disorder usually affects older adults. The exact cause of Bowen disease is unknown, although there are identified risk factors such as chronic sun exposure. The exact incidence of Bowen disease in the general population is unknown. Bowen disease is most frequently diagnosed in Caucasian individuals over the age of 60, although can occur in individuals much younger. It is believed to occur more frequently in males than females.