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Skin Conditions

Also called: Cutaneous disorders, Dermatologic disorders

What does your skin do?

Your skin is your body's largest organ. It covers the entire outside of your body. There are many ways that your skin protects your body and helps keep you healthy. For example, it:

- Holds body fluids in, which helps prevent you from getting dehydrated [<https://medlineplus.gov/dehydration.html>]
- Keeps out harmful germs, which helps prevent infections [<https://medlineplus.gov/skininfections.html>]
- Helps you feel things like heat, cold, and pain
- Helps control your body temperature
- Makes vitamin D [<https://medlineplus.gov/vitamind.html>] when the sun shines on it
- Shields your body against heat and light

What problems and conditions can affect your skin?

There are many different problems and conditions which can affect your skin. Some of them can cause uncomfortable symptoms, such as itching [<https://medlineplus.gov/itching.html>], burning, redness, and rashes [<https://medlineplus.gov/rashes.html>]. They might also affect your appearance. Some of the more common skin conditions include:

- Acne [<https://medlineplus.gov/acne.html>], which causes pimples when hair follicles under your skin get clogged up
- Burns [<https://medlineplus.gov/burns.html>]
- Cuts and scrapes [<https://medlineplus.gov/woundsandinjuries.html>]
- Dandruff [<https://medlineplus.gov/dandruffcradlecapandotherscalpconditions.html>], flaking of the skin on your scalp (the top of your head)
- Eczema [<https://medlineplus.gov/eczema.html>] (atopic dermatitis), which causes inflammation, redness, and irritation of the skin
- Hives [<https://medlineplus.gov/hives.html>], which are red and sometimes itchy bumps on your skin
- Insect bites [<https://medlineplus.gov/insectbitesandstings.html>]
- Psoriasis [<https://medlineplus.gov/psoriasis.html>], which causes itchy, scaly red patches
- Skin cancer [<https://medlineplus.gov/skincancer.html>]
- Skin infections

How can I keep my skin healthy?

Since your skin protects your body in many ways, it's important to try to keep your skin healthy. For example, you can:

- Wear the right protective equipment, like gloves, long sleeves, knee and elbow pads, or helmets to protect against cuts, bumps and scrapes.
- If you do get a cut or scrape, clean it right away with soap and warm water. Put on a bandage to protect it while it heals.
- When you are spending time outdoors, wear long sleeves and pants and use insect repellent to prevent insect bites.
- Prevent sunburn [<https://medlineplus.gov/sunexposure.html>] by covering up and using sunscreen when outdoors.

- Wash your hands [<https://medlineplus.gov/germsandhygiene.html>] often with soap and water.
- When you take a shower or bath, use warm (not hot) water. Use mild cleansers and wash gently (don't scrub).
- Use moisturizers, like lotions, creams, or ointments, to prevent dry skin.

NIH: National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases

Start Here

- Skin, Hair, and Nails: The Body's Protective Layer [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/skin-hair-nails.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/skin-hair-nails.html>]
- Symptom Checker [<https://skinsight.com/symptom-checker/>] (VisualDX)

Diagnosis and Tests

- Rash Evaluation [<https://medlineplus.gov/lab-tests/rash-evaluation/>]  (National Library of Medicine)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/pruebas-de-laboratorio/evaluacion-de-sarpullido/>]
- Skin Biopsy [<https://medlineplus.gov/lab-tests/skin-biopsy/>]  (National Library of Medicine)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/pruebas-de-laboratorio/biopsia-de-piel/>]
- Skin Cancer Screening [<https://medlineplus.gov/lab-tests/skin-cancer-screening/>]  (National Library of Medicine)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/pruebas-de-laboratorio/examen-de-cancer-de-piel/>]
- Skin Rashes and Other Skin Problems [<https://familydoctor.org/symptom/skin-rashes-skin-problems/?adfree=true>] (American Academy of Family Physicians)
Also in Spanish [<https://es.familydoctor.org/sintoma/erupciones-de-cutaneas-leves-y-otros-cambios-en-el-piel/?adfree=true>]
- Wood's Lamp Examination [<https://skinsight.com/skin-conditions/woods-lamp-examination/?lmiw9cApl=1>] (VisualDX)

Prevention and Risk Factors

- How to Protect Yourself from Job-Related Skin Problems [<https://familydoctor.org/skin-problems-how-to-protect-yourself-from-job-related-skin-problems/?adfree=true>] (American Academy of Family Physicians)
Also in Spanish [<https://es.familydoctor.org/proteccion-de-la-piel-en-el-ambiente-de-trabajo/?adfree=true>]
- Skin Care: 5 Tips for Healthy Skin [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/adult-health/in-depth/skin-care/art-20048237?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/healthy-lifestyle/adult-health/in-depth/skin-care/art-20048237?p=1>]

Treatments and Therapies

- Cryosurgery [<https://skinsight.com/skin-conditions/cryosurgery/?lmiw9cApl=1>] (VisualDX)
- Dermatology Procedures [<https://www.aocd.org/page/DermProcedures?>] (American Osteopathic College of Dermatology)
- Electrodesiccation [<https://skinsight.com/skin-conditions/electrodesiccation/?lmiw9cApl=1>] (VisualDX)
- Laser Resurfacing [<https://www.asds.net/skin-experts/skin-treatments/laser-resurfacing>]
(American Society for Dermatologic Surgery)
- Products Marketed for Removing Moles and Other Skin Lesions Can Cause Injuries, Scarring
[<https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/products-marketed-removing-moles-and-other-skin-lesions-can-cause-injuries-scarring>] (Food and Drug Administration)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.fda.gov/consumers/articulos-para-el-consumidor-en-espanol/los-productos-comercializados-para-eliminar-lunares-y-otras-carnosidades-en-la-piel-pueden-causar>]
- Skin graft - series [https://medlineplus.gov/ency/presentations/100100_1.htm] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/esp_presentations/100100_1.htm]
- Treatment of Actinic Keratosis [https://www.cancer.gov/types/skin/patient/skin-treatment-pdq#_100]
 (National Cancer Institute)
Also in Spanish [https://www.cancer.gov/espanol/tipos/piel/paciente/tratamiento-piel-pdq#_100]

Related Issues

- Post-Travel Dermatologic Conditions [<https://www.cdc.gov/yellow-book/hcp/post-travel-evaluation/post-travel-dermatologic-conditions.html>] (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- Skin Problems in Construction [https://www.cpwr.com/wp-content/uploads/HA-Skin_Problems.pdf] (Center for Construction Research and Training) - PDF

Specifics

- Delusional Parasitosis [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/mental-illness/in-depth/delusional-parasitosis/art-20044996?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
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- Dermatographia (Dermatographism) [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/dermatographia/symptoms-causes/syc-20371411?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
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- Dry Skin [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/dry-skin/symptoms-causes/syc-20353885?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
- Dry Skin (Xerosis) [<https://www.aad.org/public/diseases/a-z/dry-skin-overview?NoAds>] (American Academy of Dermatology)
- Ectodermal Dysplasia [<https://www.nidcr.nih.gov/health-info/ectodermal-dysplasia>]
 (National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.nidcr.nih.gov/espanol/temas-de-salud/displasia-ectodermica>]
- Epidermolysis Bullosa [<https://www.niams.nih.gov/health-topics/epidermolysis-bullosa>]
 (National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.niams.nih.gov/es/informacion-de-salud/epidermolisis-ampolloso>]
- Lichen Planus: Overview [<https://www.aad.org/public/diseases/a-z/lichen-planus-overview?NoAds>] (American Academy of Dermatology)
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- Pachyonychia Congenita [<https://www.niams.nih.gov/health-topics/pachyonychia-congenita>]
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- Pityriasis Rosea: Overview [<https://www.aad.org/public/diseases/a-z/pityriasis-rosea-overview?NoAds>] (American Academy of Dermatology)
- Stevens-Johnson Syndrome [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/stevens-johnson-syndrome/symptoms-causes/syc-20355936?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
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- What Is Ichthyosis? [<https://www.niams.nih.gov/health-topics/ichthyosis>]
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- Adermatoglyphia: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/adermatoglyphia>]
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- Lamellar ichthyosis: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/lamellar-ichthyosis>]  (National Library of Medicine)
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- Keratoacanthoma [<https://skinsight.com/skin-conditions/keratoacanthoma/?lmiw9cApl=1>] (VisualDX)
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Videos and Tutorials

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Statistics and Research

- Skin Conditions by the Numbers [<https://www.aad.org/media/stats-numbers?NoAds>] (American Academy of Dermatology)

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- Skin Conditions -- see more articles [<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=%22Skin+Diseases%22%5Bmajr%3Anoexp%5D+AND+humans%5Bmh%5D+AND+english%5Bla%5D+AND+%22last+1+Year%22+%5Bdat%5D+NOT+%28letter%5Bpt%5D+OR+case+reports%5Bpt%5D+OR+editorial%5Bpt%5D+OR+comment%5Bpt%5D%29+AND+free+full+text%5Bsb%5D+>]

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Find an Expert

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- American Society for Dermatologic Surgery [<https://www.asds.net/>]
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- National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases [<https://www.niams.nih.gov/>] 
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National Institutes of Health

The primary NIH organization for research on *Skin Conditions* is the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases [<http://www.niams.nih.gov/>]

NIH MedlinePlus Magazine

Skin 101: Identifying Common Conditions [<https://magazine.medlineplus.gov/article/skin-101-identifying-common-conditions>]

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