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INFORMATION ON PITYRIASIS AMIANTACEA

(also known as "Tinea amiantacea")

What is Pityriasis amiantacea ?

- This is a scalp condition that can lead to hair loss. For some patients, the hair loss is temporary whereas for others it may be permanent
- All patients with pityriasis amiantacea, have thick scale that surrounds hair follicles. The scale sometimes looks like "shingles" on a roof. When hairs are removed from the scalp, the scales come off with the hairs
- Shiny scales are attached to the hair shaft
- It can be localized to just one area or cover the entire scalp
- Hair loss can occur from repeated removal of hairs attached to the scalp

What causes this condition? Who gets it?

- It's important to understand that this is not a single condition but rather a scalp appearance that occurs from many different conditions. Therefore, patients with a variety of scalp conditions can get pityriasis amiantacea.
- Pityriasis can be seen in many conditions, including the following top three reasons:
 - Psoriasis
 - Seborrheic dermatitis
 - Atopic dermatitis
- It is a rare condition with women more affected than men

What tests will be done with this condition?

- Most of the time, no tests are needed
- Your doctor may perform a bacterial and fungal culture and rarely may do a biopsy

What does this condition look like?

The condition is often associated with thick sticky scale which is tightly bound to hairs. The photo below shows a typical appearance.



How do you treat this condition?

- There are a variety of treatments for pityriasis amiantacea and the precise treatment Dr. Donovan uses will depend on the cause
- If bacteria or fungi are found, you will be given medications by mouth
- Often, Dr. Donovan will use one or more of the following
 1. 5 % salicylic acid in mineral oil applied overnight with a shower cap (it can get messy!). The oil is then washed out of the scalp in the morning with Sebcur T shampoo. Make sure to scrub your scalp well. Then apply Clobetasol lotion for the day.
 2. Steroid injections alone or Topical steroids alone
 3. Topical anti-dandruff shampoos including shampoos containing ketoconazole, zinc pyrithione, selenium sulphide or ciclopirox.
 4. Topical vitamin D analogues
 5. Topical vitamin D with topical steroids
 6. Topical retinoids

Generally, we advise no more than 3-4 weeks of treatment before the response to treatment is carefully assessed.

