

Seborrheic Keratosis



What is seborrheic keratosis?

A seborrheic keratosis is a common, harmless skin growth that generally first appears after age 40. It continues to grow slowly, and more of them appear with time.



Some people develop large numbers on areas exposed to the sun and on covered areas. The tendency to develop them is inherited, but sunlight may play a role.



Seborrheic keratoses are harmless and they never become cancerous. They begin as slightly raised, light brown spots, and gradually thicken. The surface may look waxy, scaly, crusted, or like a rough wart.

They get progressively darker and may turn black, which is why they are sometimes mistaken for malignant melanomas.

People who have had several seborrheic keratoses can usually recognize this type of benign growth. If you are concerned or unsure about any growth, consult your dermatologist.

Treatment

Seborrheic keratoses can easily be removed in the office with surgery or freezing (cryotherapy).

You generally do not need treatment unless the growths get irritated, itch, or annoy you by rubbing against your clothes. Some people also choose to have them removed because it affects their appearance.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call:

Department of Dermatology

8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday

716-845-3378