



Age Spots

Age spots are skin blemishes that come with aging. All age spots are generally harmless. They are more a cosmetic issue than a medical one. It is important, though, to distinguish them from skin cancer. (See “Skin Cancer” at www.HealthyLearn.com.)

Prevention

Reduce exposure to the sun. When you are outdoors, use a sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or higher.

Signs & Symptoms

- Small or large, flat, freckle-like marks that are different shades of brown (liver spots). These most often appear on the arms, backs of hands, back, face, or shoulders.
- Brown or yellow slightly raised spots (seborrheic warts)
- Red, pinpoint blemishes (cherry angiomas)

Causes & Care

Aging skin is thinner and more sensitive to the sun’s rays. Small, dark patches appear in response.

In general, age spots do not need medical treatment. A doctor can freeze an age spot with liquid nitrogen or remove it in a minor surgical procedure, if skin cancer is suspected.



Self-Care:

To Help Make Age Spots Less Noticeable:

- Avoid sun exposure.
- Try a bleaching cream.
- Apply lemon juice twice a day to age spots.
- Dab buttermilk on spots and lightly pat dry.
- Use fresh aloe gel on spots. Do this twice a day for a month.
- Use a mild, moisturizing make-up.



Contact Doctor When:

- You suspect the spots are skin cancer. (See “Signs & Symptoms” of skin cancer at www.HealthyLearn.com.)
- An age spot bleeds, itches, or tingles.
- You have bothersome age spots that resist fading after using self-care.
- You want advice on removing age spots; on creams with the medicine Retin-A; or on chemical peels.