

## **Q&A about Keratosis Pilaris (KP)**

### **Ten Common Questions and Answers about Keratosis Pilaris**

#### **What is Keratosis Pilaris (KP)?**

KP is an inherited skin condition that results from a build up of keratin, a hard protein that protects the skin from harmful substances and infection. This build up forms a scaly plug that blocks the opening of the hair follicle. The skin appears rough and bumpy when many plugs form.

#### **Who has KP?**

Approximately 40 percent of the population has KP according to the American Academy of Dermatology. KP is a genetic disorder that is most obvious during the teenage years and adults also suffer from it.

#### **What does KP look like?**

The skin's surface is often covered by scattered skin-colored and/or red bumps, which may give the skin a sandpaper-like texture.



Source: [http://www.aad.org/public/publications/pamphlets/skin\\_dry.html](http://www.aad.org/public/publications/pamphlets/skin_dry.html)

Keratosis Pilaris is only one of many skin conditions that can cause little red bumps. Sometimes little red bumps are a sign of a more serious medical problem. Only your doctor can determine if you have Keratosis Pilaris.

#### **Where on the body do KP outbreaks most commonly occur?**

KP most commonly appears on the backs and sides of arms, the front of the thighs, and buttocks.

#### **Does KP pose a threat to my health?**

In general, other than being unsightly and itchy at times, KP is typically harmless. Be sure to work with your doctor to determine that you have KP and not another, potentially more serious, skin condition that requires a different treatment.

#### **Is there a cure for KP?**

Once diagnosed, there is no cure for KP. To manage the rough, dry skin that results from KP, doctors may recommend a strong moisturizer that contains lactic acid, such as AmLactin® or AmLactin XL®. Some skin conditions may be worsened by moisturizers, so always follow your doctor's skin care recommendations.

#### **What is lactic acid and how will it help my KP?**

Lactic acid is an alpha-hydroxy acid. Alpha-hydroxy acids are extremely effective humectants or naturally occurring substances that attract water molecules to the skin's surface to keep it hydrated. Not all moisturizers and lotions contain lactic acid, so it is important to review a product's label before choosing a moisturizer.

#### **Is KP contagious?**

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<http://www.littleredbumps.com/qa-about-keratosis-pilaris-kp/>

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No, KP cannot be transmitted through human contact of any sort. It is not caused by a virus or infection, but rather a genetic condition (which means you only have your parents to blame).

### **Is KP seasonal?**

People with KP often experience a high incidence of outbreaks in cold weather. Cold weather exacerbates this condition due to low humidity levels and forced indoor air that dries out the air.

### **What can I do to manage the dry skin associated with KP?**

We encourage you to refer to the ["Tips from an Expert on Keratosis Pilaris"](#) by Dr. Alan Fleischer on this site.