

LICHEN PLANUS

DEFINITION

Lichen planus is a skincondition that can affect skin all over your body as well as your mucous membranes.

AGE AND SEX

Lichen planus mainly affects adults between 30-60 years old, equally men and women. In some rare cases it can be due to certain medication or Hepatitis C.

CAUSES

In most cases the cause of the disease is unknown.

SYMPTOMS

The change in the mucous membranes tends to be the only symptom. Women can have visible symptoms on their outer genitalia, in the form of:

- ❖ Pains, stinging, burning feeling
- ❖ Pain during intercourse
- ❖ Itching
- ❖ Inflamed or bloody discharge
- ❖ Narrowing/tightening of the vagina or vaginal entrance

Many women whose genitalia are affected by lichen planus also experience the infection in their oral cavity, gums, tongue, cheek mucosa, or on their skin.

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?

For women:

- ❖ Redness on your mucous membranes
- ❖ Mucous membrane is thin and smooth, without the usual folds
- ❖ White patches/stripes on the mucous membrane

- ❖ Tendency to get bruises on the surface of the mucous membrane

DIAGNOSIS

Lichen planus is diagnosed with a biopsy; a small piece of affected tissue gets examined under a microscope. Only a doctor can proceed to the biopsy.

TREATMENT

Most patients suffering of lichen planus can be treated with ointments or tablets.

Localised Treatment

In terms of localised treatments, ointments/creams with strong adrenal cortex hormone (steroid) are generally recommended (f.ex. Dermovat).

- ❖ First 4 weeks: apply every evening
- ❖ Next 4 weeks: apply every other evening (1/2)
- ❖ Next 4 weeks: apply twice a week
- ❖ Lifelong maintenance treatment: once a week

NOTE: do not apply more than 30-60grams of ointment/cream per year. You can pause the treatment if symptoms entirely disappear, and if they reappear you can restart the treatment.

If you do not see any improvement with the steroid-based ointment/cream, you can try calcineurin inhibitors (CNI) as either cream or ointment. There are two types available: Tacrolimus ointments (Protopic) or Pimecrolimus creams (Elidel). These forms of lichen planus treatments are not known as long-term treatments.

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Tablet Treatment

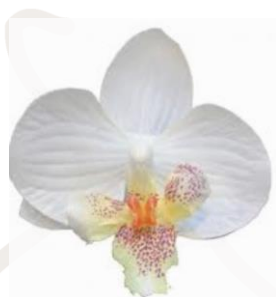
If you have many symptoms and ointment doesn't help, we can prescribe tablets instead (Azathioprin or Ciclosporin),

CHECK-UP

Patients with lichen planus on their mucous membranes tend to have a longer and chronic condition. In such cases we therefore recommend a yearly check-up since there is a slightly higher risk of abnormal cells and mucous membrane cancer.

WHO CAN I CALL WITH QUESTIONS?

You are welcome to call Kvindeklivnikken during telephone hours on 36 46 71 40.



Revised September 2022. To be revised on an ongoing basis and certainly no later than September 2025, before in case of any significant changes.