

North Carolina Dermatology Associates, PLLC
7920 ACC Blvd., Suite 100
Raleigh, NC 27617
Ph# 919-596-9600

Keratosis Pilaris

Keratosis Pilaris is a skin condition commonly seen on the upper arms, buttocks, and thighs. Up to 75% of the population has keratosis pilaris. With this condition, skin cells that normally flake off as a fine dust from the skin form plugs in the hair follicles. These appear as small pimples that have a dry “sandpaper” feeling. They are usually white but sometimes rather red. They usually don’t itch or hurt.

Keratosis Pilaris is particularly common in teenagers on the upper arms. It may occur in babies where it tends to be most obvious on the cheeks. It may remain for years but generally gradually disappears before the age of 30. It is usually worse during the winter months or other times of low humidity when skin dries out, and may worsen during pregnancy or after childbirth.

Treatment of Keratosis Pilaris is not necessary, and unfortunately often has disappointing results. With persistence, most people can get very satisfactory improvement. Initial treatment should be intensive moisturizing. Try a cream such as **Am-Lactin** (available at pharmacies OTC, but may have to ask the pharmacist for it) after bathing, and re-apply the cream again several times daily.

If this does not help, change to a cream containing urea (Carmol-20) or alpha-hydroxy acids (Aqua Glycolic, Lacticare) applied twice daily – it may be too irritating to use more often. More aggressive home treatment may be done if ones skin can tolerate it. The plugged pores can be improved by using a **salicylic acid** containing body wash and rubbing the areas with a coarse washcloth, stiff brush, or a “Buf-Puf”.