

# What's The Deal With Those Bumps On Your Body?

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It can be a little bit scary when you suddenly notice your smooth skin has sprouted a fresh bump. A lot of the time, a lump here or there on your face is from acne, which we've become pretty accustomed to recognizing. But what if they're dry, itchy, or tender, or showing up elsewhere on our bodies? Bumps can be confusing to identify and even harder to understand.

Although facial and body bumps are incredibly common, not all ridges and marks are created equally. From little red dots to rough scaly patches, the wide variety alone is enough to baffle us.

To help you recognize what's forming on your skin and what to do about it, we spoke with Dr. Amy Perlmutter, board-certified Dermatologist at New York Dermatology Group. If you do spot a mark forming on your body, the best course of action is to see a dermatologist. But in the meantime, try not to freak out. Take a peek below for info about some of the most frequent spots sighted.

## ROSACEA

A skin condition most commonly located on the central facial region, rosacea may encompass a combination of flushing, persistent redness, and visible vessels, according to Dr. Perlmutter. It can also produce small, acne-like bumps that usually occur where the skin is red, called papulopustular rosacea, she says. This subtype generally forms on those between 30 to 50 years old, Dr. Perlmutter says, although all types of rosacea can be present before or after. It's also more commonly seen on individuals with fair skin.

However, the exact reason why they form is still being researched. Think: hereditary and immune system factors or infections, according to the American Academy of Dermatology. But it's still not cause for concern. The redness or acne-like papules are not contagious or harmful to your health, although they can feel sensitive or cause a burning sensation, according to Dr. Perlmutter.

To help control rosacea, avoid skin irritating products or common triggers that aggravate it, like hot drinks, spicy foods, alcohol, or sunlight. Because of the latter, also be sure to look for products with SPF. Dr. Perlmutter recommends at-home creams that are rosacea friendly, like Aveeno Positively Radiant SPF 30 or La Roche Posay Double Repair Moisturizer SPF 30, or long-term solutions like laser treatments or prescription medications that can help control both red patches and acne-like bumps.

## ECZEMA

Creating red and irritated skin, eczema is "an itchy rash that makes the skin pink, dry, and scaly," says Dr. Perlmutter. It usually develops before age 5 — though it can also develop during infancy, childhood, or adulthood — when skin is unable to provide moisture and protection from bacteria, irritants, and allergens, according to the Mayo Clinic. Since an impaired skin barrier leads to water loss, the skin can't protect itself from these irritants, Dr. Perlmutter says.

These scaly patches are not contagious, but they do have risk of bacterial infection on affected areas, according to Dr. Perlmutter. And while there may not be a permanent solution — since eczema can periodically flare up and return for some people — there are options to help control it.

Proper bathing with gentle cleansers, like NYDG Skincare Oatmeal Cleanser, and emollients — which help soften and smooth skin — like from Cetaphil or Dove, are staples to adapt into your routine. Topical steroids can also help with flare-ups, according to Dr. Perlmutter, but be sure to talk to your dermatologist before working these into your routine.

## SCALP FOLLICULITIS

Though it could be harder to spot, your scalp may be subject to uncomfortable bumps, too. Scalp folliculitis are pink papules and pustules that may feel tender on your head. "This is inflammation of the hair follicle that can be from infectious or non-infectious causes and is generally seen more in adults," says Dr. Perlmutter.

If it is due to infection, it likely develops from a bacterial one, according to the Mayo Clinic. These can also be contagious, according to Dr. Perlmutter. If you notice something amiss on your scalp, check in with your doctor. You may be prescribed topical medications or oral antibiotics to treat the condition, depending on the severity of your bumps and the frequency of recurrence.

With non-infectious folliculitis, there's no health risk involved, although they might be uncomfortable. Use of over-the-counter shampoos, like Head and Shoulders or Nizoral, may be beneficial, Dr. Perlmutter says.

## MILIA

These are tiny white bumps that usually appear on the nose or cheeks, and are tiny cysts composed of keratin, says Dr. Perlmutter. Milia usually show no symptoms but are formed when keratin — the protein that makes up the outer layer of skin, as well as the hair and nails — gets trapped beneath the skin.

You'll most commonly spot them on the face in infants, although they can appear anywhere on the body, and at any age. "They tend to develop spontaneously or less commonly in association with sun damage, skin trauma, or a blistering disorder," she says.

While the bumps are not contagious, or associated with a health risk, there are still some treatments that can help if it's bothersome to you. Dr. Perlmutter recommends using oil-free and non-comedogenic products, like Cerave or Sente Bio Complete Serum, AHAs — which help exfoliate — and retinoids to increase cell turnover. However, if you're seeing persistent lesions, visit your dermatologist for more permanent treatments.

## ACTINIC KERATOSIS

Actinic keratosis are "persistent rough, pink scaly patches found most often on sun-exposed locations due to cumulative sun exposure and skin damage," Dr. Perlmutter says. These lesions, which become more common as you age, may be mildly tender, itchy, or even bleed. While most actinic keratosis are not contagious, they are considered precancerous lesions.

Over time, some may progress to skin cancer if left untreated. You'll want to see your doctor for treatment if you spot these dry and rough scaly marks, says Dr. Perlmutter. You'll likely get a prescription topical agent, cryotherapy — which applies extremely cold liquid nitrogen — or photodynamic therapy — which generally uses blue light combined with a light-sensitizing topical solution.

Keep in mind you should also apply SPF daily to help prevent new lesions, especially since they can develop over time depending on sun exposure or sunburn history.

## CHERRY ANGIOMAS

Little red moles which are most often found on the torso, though you may also spot them on the head, neck, or other limbs, cherry angiomas are benign blood vessel growths, says Dr. Perlmutter. These bright red discolored circles or ovals show no symptoms and are most common on those aged 30 or older.

However, they can also increase during pregnancy or signal something more serious if they develop in mass, in which case, consult a doctor. Otherwise, there's usually no medical significance with these bumps. If you are looking to remove them, the best course of action is to visit a dermatologist who can perform cosmetic treatments.