

FRAGILE SKIN BLEEDING (SUN INDUCED PURPURA)

Easy bruising and bleeding into the skin of the tops of the hands and forearms occurs in many middle-aged and older people especially if their skin is fair. This easy bleeding which can occur without apparent injury is a result of the skin being made thin and fragile by years of sunlight exposure. It is *not* the result of a blood disorder or internal disease. The fact that bleeding occurs only on the sun damaged areas of the hands and forearms and never on the covered parts of the body clearly shows that it results from local skin damage.

Sun exposure over the years even without sunburning can thin your skin and damage its supporting fibers. These sun-damaged fibers can no longer adequately support your skin and its blood vessels. Even slight movement may cause an unsupported blood vessel to break. This releases blood into the skin and leaves unsightly purplish marks.

Occasionally treatment of certain skin conditions with a specific type of shot or a specific pill can also make the blood vessels more fragile. Developing these bruises is a side effect of this cortisone treatment.

Unfortunately there is no specific treatment for fragile skin bleeding. It is only a problem due to the appearance of the skin. Again it is important to realize that this is not evidence of any internal disease or blood disorder. If you have any other questions about this condition, please do not hesitate to ask before you leave the office.