

Lichen Striatus

Lichen striatus is an uncommon form of a skin condition that usually occurs in children. Lichen striatus begins with the sudden appearance of small bumps that are red, pink, or skin-colored. Within a few days or up to several weeks the bumps expand to form a long streak or linear band. The cause of lichen striatus is unknown.

These linear lesions are usually seen on the arms and legs and are pink, tan, or white in color. Usually only one extremity is involved. Nail involvement may occasionally happen.

Lichen striatus occurs most often in children ages 5-15 but may occur at any age. It appears that it is more common in girls than in boys. Lichen striatus is not dangerous, nor is it a sign of internal disease. Lichen striatus is not contagious and thus cannot be spread to others.

Patients with lichen striatus are usually asymptomatic, and would not know the lesion was there besides the physical appearance. The most common complaint is mildly itchy skin, in the area of the eruption.

There is no specific treatment for lichen striatus. In most cases the rash will resolve spontaneously within one to two years. At certain times applying prescription creams may be helpful, especially if the area is itchy.

