



## **MILIA**

Milia are raised, whitish bumps on the skin that commonly appear on infants after birth, but adults can get them too. The miniscule, pimple-like cysts appear because dead skin cells are trapped in the surface of the skin. The primary form of milia generally goes away on its own in infants. Adults, however, may also experience milia's secondary form, which requires some medical attention.

### **What Causes Milia?**

In primary milia cases, like the miniscule cysts that appear on a newborn, the skin just can't remove the dead skin cells. That means, instead of being sloughed off, the cells get trapped and clog oil-producing pores.

Secondary milia occur when a skin condition that leads to blistering actually damages ducts in the skin. This also results in dead skin cells getting trapped. Burns or rashes like poison ivy can cause enough blistering to increase trapped skin cells on the surface. But skin diseases such as bullous pemphigoid which causes chronic blistering can also lead to secondary milia.

In some adults, sun damage is also a major contributor to milia, because it thickens and toughens the outer layer of the skin, making it harder for dead skin cells to find their way out of glands. The cysts then form in the areas that were overexposed to unforgiving rays. Other causes of milia include topical steroid use or spa treatments such as skin resurfacing procedures or dermabrasion.

### **Milia Treatments**

Primary milia – the kind babies get – don't require a doctor's visit. The bumps commonly disappear within a few weeks. If you have a case of secondary milia, you may get a prescription for a retinoid cream. Your doctor might also remove the bumps with a lancet or scalpel followed by a special tool called a comedone extractor.