



PROGRESSIVE PIGMENTARY PURPURA

Progressive pigmentary purpura (PPP) is a group of similar conditions (Schamberg's disease, Lichenoid dermatitis of Gourgerot-Blum, purpura annularis telangiectodes of Majocchi, and Lichen aureus). Schamberg's type is the most common, but many experts believe that dividing them into subgroups is artificial.

PPP results in a rusty brown skin discoloration on the legs. The brownish patches are unevenly scattered on both sides and may be few or many. Within the patches are tiny red dots that look as if someone lightly sprinkled cayenne pepper on the area. The area is flat, smooth, and not scaly. There are no internal symptoms.

PPP usually starts in adult life and is more common in men. PPP can go away on its own within a few weeks, persist for years, or disappear only to recur again from time to time.

No one knows what causes it, but a biopsy shows inflammation around the tiny capillaries in the skin. The blood leaking through the damaged walls forms the little red dots. A biopsy is often done to confirm diagnosis.

Treatment is not always needed. Itching can usually be controlled with prescription steroid creams. More extensive cases can be treated with oral Trental (Pentoxifyline), which improves circulation.