



# SKIN CONCERNS

WITH FRANCES FURLONG

*This month I am going to focus on some safe sun tips and facts, most of you will no doubt be heading off for a sun filled holiday.*

**W**hilst those of us with children are especially good in choosing the right creams, SPF swimsuits and all in one suits, hats, UV tents and brollies, the same can't be said for our own concern on being safe in the sun and avoidance of sunburn. Also addressing some body concerns that when our bodies are more exposed on the beach we are more conscious of and how to remove them quickly and effectively before the holiday season.

**SKIN TAGS** are small flesh-coloured or pigmented growths that hang off the skin and look a bit like warts. They are very common, harmless and vary in size from a few millimetres up to 5 cm wide! They are usually found on the neck, armpits, around the groin, inner thighs or under the breasts. They can also grow on the eyelids or under the folds of the buttocks.

#### *Why Skin Tags Occur*

Anyone can develop skin tags, but they are particularly common in older people and people with diabetes. Pregnant women may be more likely to develop skin tags, caused by changes in their hormone levels. Some people develop them for no apparent reason.

Skin tags tend to grow where skin rubs against skin or clothing. This would explain why they also tend to affect overweight people or younger children who have excess folds of skin.

Removing skin tags can be effectively achieved by using Cryotherapy (freezing off). This simple method takes a few seconds, mild discomfort at site, normally drop off within a week or so depending on the size of the skin tag.

**MILIA** A milium cyst is a small, white bump that typically appears on the nose and cheeks. These cysts are often found in groups, and in these cases are called Milia. The cysts occur when keratin becomes trapped beneath the surface of the skin. Keratin is a strong protein that is typically found in skin tissues, hair and nail cells.

Milia can occur in people of all ages, but they are most common in newborns. They are typically found on the face and eyelids.

#### *What Causes Milia?*

The cause of Milia in newborns is unknown. It is often mistaken for baby acne, which is triggered by hormones from the mother.

In older children and adults, Milia are typically associated with some type of damage to the skin, such as:

- blistering due to a skin condition
- burns
- blistering injuries, such as poison ivy
- skin resurfacing procedures, such as dermabrasion or laser resurfacing
- long-term use of steroid creams
- long-term sun damage

Treatments include:

- using a sterile needle to pick out the contents of the cyst;
- medications, such as topical retinoids (creams that contain vitamin A compounds);
- chemical peels;
- laser ablation, which involves using a small and focused laser to destroy the cyst;
- diathermy, which involves using extreme heat to destroy the cysts;
- destruction curettage, which involves surgical scraping and cauterization to destroy the cysts;
- cryotherapy, which involves freezing and is the most frequently used method to destroy the cysts.

#### **SAFE IN THE SUN TIPS**

**FACT** - According to the British Association of Dermatologists a survey carried out showed that 8 out of 10 people are failing to adequately apply sunscreen before going out in the sun. Furthermore, 80% don't apply sunscreen before going out in the sun or shortly afterwards. Shockingly only 35% of people surveyed would only seek shade if they were hot rather than to avoid burning! There is no doubt that health campaigns have helped in making people aware of the link between sunburn and skin cancer, but there is a great need to educate on the right sun cream and how to properly apply and reapply.

**FACT** - Men's skin cancer knowledge lags behinds women's, according to the 2016 American Academy of Dermatology survey only 56% of men knew that skin cancer can occur on areas of the skin not typically exposed to the sun, compared with 65% of women. It is so important to regularly check moles and be aware of changes or new marks or lesions to the body. Get your partner or friend to check your back and scalp as it's obviously a tricky area to scan yourself. Alternatively there are many private clinics that do full body mole screening.

**FACT** - If sun creams feel too heavy and greasy on the face and body we are less likely to want to use them! I am a big fan of Inspira Med SPF 30-50 on the face and body. It's a great anti-ageing cream too so your skin looks less crepey and lined after being in the sun and there is a great anti-ageing After Sun to use after which plumps and hydrates and repairs the skin after sun exposure.

Heliocare particularly the gel formulas are great for oily, acne prone skin, there is nothing worse than your sun cream clogging your skin and being left with lots of spots on holiday. It comes in plain and a beautiful tint that gives you a lovely glow and illuminates your skin. High St brands like Nivea are great too especially their protect and fresh sprays which helps to cool your skin too. ■

#### THE DETAILS

Please call Michelle on 07508 404862 for further information.

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