

Actinic Keratoses (AK): chronic relapsing and remitting disease diagnosed clinically.

Patient Assessment - Document:

- Disease severity
- Duration and presence of symptoms
- Co-morbidities and risk factors for skin cancer
- Whole skin examination requires noting sun damage, number and grade of lesions and evidence of skin cancer

Red flags – refer via Two Week Wait pathway if squamous cell carcinoma (SCC) suspected:

- Refer to red flag criteria for SCC

Less than 10 lesions

FIELD CHANGE: Confluent areas with 10 or more lesions with features matching any or all of the grades of AK

Grade 1

Pink or grey marks with slight scale or gritty to touch

Grade 2

Moderate hyperkeratosis and easily detected

Grade 3

Hypertrophic
Thick keratin

Individual lesions do not universally require treatment on the basis of preventing progression to SCC. Give reassurance to the patient that the condition is benign. Explain diagnosis support with patient information leaflet from British Association of Dermatologists

No active treatment given. Recommend emollient and sun screen only

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No active treatment given if removed scale and excluded SCC clinically. Recommend emollient and sun screen

Exceptions: Ears and immunosuppressed individuals

Education at the outset of using active topical therapies is ESSENTIAL. Ensure a full understanding of how to apply treatment and the nature of the side-effects, which can be marked. Missing this step will lead to poor patient outcomes

Solaraze is not recommended.

Should a prescriber feel they wish to treat then Efudix is the treatment of choice; see BNF for prescribing information on site and duration

Efudix 5% Cream Regime

- Twice daily for 3 weeks face
- Twice daily 4 weeks other sites

Refer to local provider only if:

- Field change not responding to treatment
- Grade 3 AK failed to respond to treatment
- Grade 2 or 3 AK occurring in long-term immunosuppressed patient that has failed to respond to treatment

Supporting Information Links:

BAD patient information leaflet - <http://www.bad.org.uk/shared/get-file.ashx?id=66&itemtype=document>

BAD guidelines for AK - <http://www.bad.org.uk/shared/get-file.ashx?itemtype=document&id=4289>