

Vitiligo



- Vitiligo is an immune disease that causes skin color loss because the skin loses pigment cells that give us color. Family history (genetic factors) is important in some cases, but not all types of vitiligo have a genetic factor.
- This condition is not considered life threatening or contagious.
- This can result in discolored spots in different areas of the body, including the skin, hair, retina, and mucous membranes.
- Sometimes the loss of color caused by vitiligo is similar on both sides of the body.
- The severity and rate of color loss caused by Vitiligo is not very predictable. Vitiligo can appear at any age, but mostly before the age of 20 and Vitiligo affects people with different skin types.
- It may cover many parts of the body, only one side, one area, or only a few areas of the body. It is difficult to predict how the disease will progress. Sometimes its appearance stops without any treatment. In some cases, pigment loss spreads and eventually affects most of the skin.
- You may feel stress, shame, sadness, shame or even frustration due to the change that vitiligo causes in your appearance. You may feel that your medical condition limits your ability to carry out your daily activities, especially if vitiligo is very common or affects visible areas of the body, such as the face, hands, arms, and feet.

Diagnosis

If your doctor suspects you have vitiligo, he will ask you about your medical history, and he will perform tests to rule out other medical problems, such as dermatitis or psoriasis. He or she may use a special lamp to spot UV light on the skin to determine if you have vitiligo. In addition to your personal medical history, your family's medical history, and skin examination, your doctor may take a small sample (biopsy) of the affected skin to confirm the diagnosis and some laboratory tests may be requested to search for underlying autoimmune conditions, as anemia thyroid disease or diabetes.

Vitiligo treatment

- Vitiligo is a permanent disease, and the affected skin will always be very sensitive to sunlight. Avoid exposure to the sun and use sunscreen with at least SPF 30.
- The most important thing to know is that vitiligo is a social stigmata in our community and becoming more acceptable is the best way to deal with it.
- It is possible to improve the appearance of the skin by applying self-tanning or cosmetic / foundation creams.
- If you feel despair or psychological distress, you can be referred to a mental health service provider.
- Vitiligo treatment may restore the color of the affected skin. But it does not prevent the continued loss of skin color or its occurrence again. There is no cure for vitiligo. However, the treatment may help stop or reduce the process of discoloration and restore some skin color.

- Many treatments are available to help restore skin tone or even improve skin tone. Results vary from person to person, and are not predictable. Also, some treatments have serious side effects. And it takes several months to judge its effectiveness.

- Even if the treatment has been successful for a while, the results may not last or new spots may appear.

- Creams that control inflammation (such as cortisone). Applying these creams to the affected skin may help to return color, especially if you use it early in the disease. And you may not notice any change in skin color for several months. Cortisone creams are effective and easy to use but may cause side effects, such as skin thinning or cracks on your skin. Lighter forms of the drug may be prescribed to children and to people affected in large areas of their skin.

- Medicines that affect the immune system (Tacrolimus and Pimecrolimus). These ointments / creams are used as alternatives to cortisone and can be used in combination with UVB rays.

Phototherapy:

The affected areas are exposed to artificial ultraviolet (UVA or UVB) rays. These methods tend to yield better results than topical medications. However, you may need to repeat treatments up to three times a week for six to 12 months.

Depigmentation therapy:

Remove the remaining color. This treatment can be one of the options if vitiligo spreads to most areas and other treatments don't work.

Surgery

- Surgery may be an option for treatment in limited areas if light therapy is not effective.

- Skin grafts. In this procedure, the doctor removes very small parts of the skin of a natural pigment and transfers them to the areas where the pigment was lost. This procedure is sometimes used if you have small spots of vitiligo Possible risks include infection, scarring, appearance of gallstones, color spots, and failure of the area to restore color.

- Tattoos (precise pigmentation). In this technique, the doctor uses a special surgical instrument to transplant the dye into the skin. It is most effective in and around the lips in darker skinned people. ... side effects include the difficulty of matching skin tone and the possibility that tattoos can lead to other spots of vitiligo.

Possible future treatments

- Drugs that reverse color loss. **Tofacitinib** , an oral medication commonly used to treat rheumatoid arthritis, has shown some capabilities as a treatment for vitiligo. It is very expensive and only used in rare cases.

- Medications to stimulate color-producing cells (melanocytes). **Afamelanotide**, this potential treatment is implanted under the skin to promote the growth of melanocytes.

- Drugs that help control melanocytes. **Prostaglandin E2** is being tested as a method to restore skin tone in those with unexplained limited vitiligo. It is a gel used on the skin.