

Treatments: BHD and the Skin



This leaflet gives an overview of skin treatments in BHD.

Fibrofolliculomas and Trichodiscomas

- Fibrofolliculomas and Trichodiscomas are small skin bumps most commonly found on the face, neck and upper body in people with BHD. To the naked eye they appear identical, but differences may be seen when looked at under a microscope. More research is needed to help understand these differences.
- 9 in 10 people with BHD will get these skin bumps. They usually start to appear from the age of 20. You may develop more as you age.
- They are not cancerous or dangerous to your health. Some people living with BHD feel self-conscious about them. You can seek help from a dermatologist if these skin bumps are affecting you.

Examples of fibrofolliculomas:

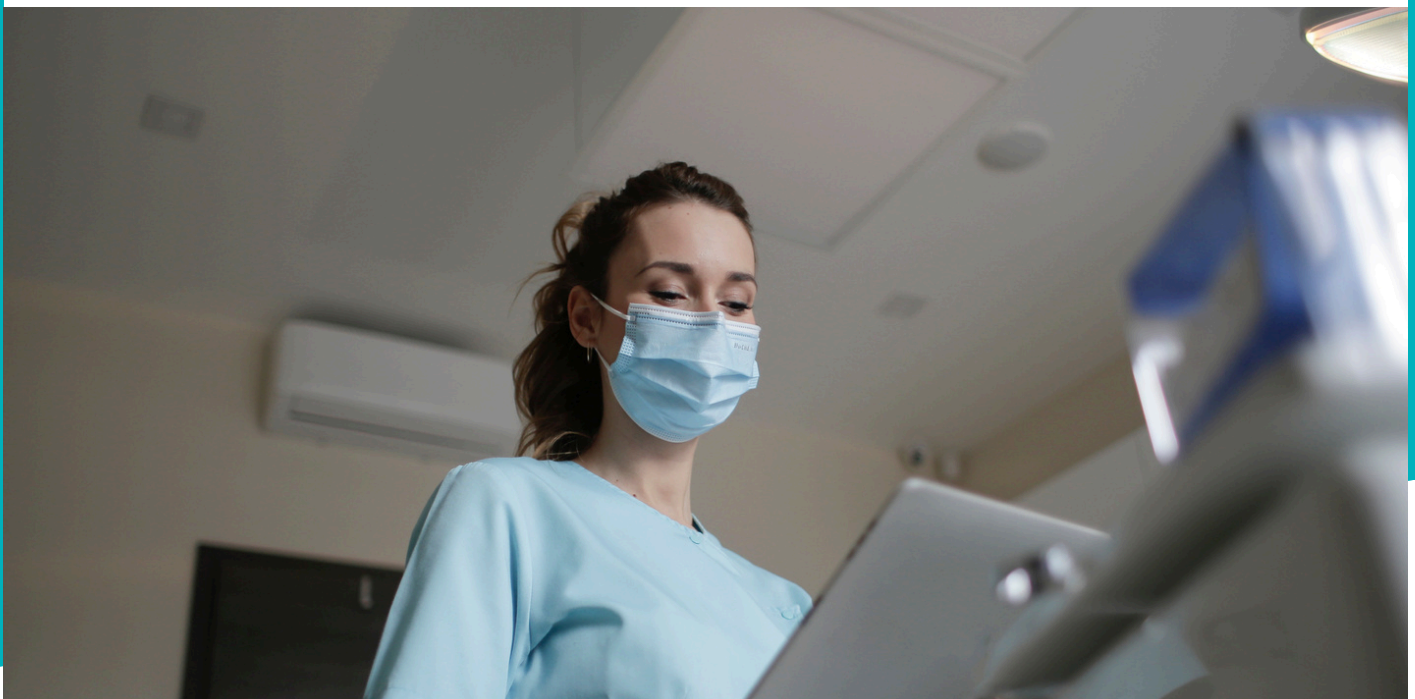


Photos courtesy of Dr Derek Lim, University of Birmingham, UK

Treatments

Please note that suitable treatment for skin features of BHD varies from individual to individual.

- There are currently no treatment options that will prevent the growth of new BHD skin bumps. Treatments are often only temporary, and recurrence of these tumours is common. This is because BHD is a genetic condition.
- This leaflet provides an overview of some available treatments. However, you should always discuss treatment options and their side effects with a dermatologist.
- Availability of treatments will also depend on your national health system or insurance.



Available treatments include:

- **Hyfrecation:** This is a type of electrosurgery. It has been used successfully to treat skin lesions in BHD. It can also be combined with a technique called curettage. Curettage involves the removal of skin lesions using a sharp spoon-shaped surgical implement.
- **Cryosurgery:** This involves the use of cold electrodes to freeze and destroy tissue.
- **Laser:** Several types of laser treatments have been used to treat the skin lesions associated with BHD. The most commonly used are CO2 or Erbium: YAG lasers. A combination of these two types of lasers can be used.
- **Surgery:** Skin lesions can be removed surgically. Different types of skin lesions may benefit from different surgical techniques.



References:

- PDQ® Cancer Genetics Editorial Board. PDQ Birt-Hogg-Dubé Syndrome. Bethesda, MD: National Cancer Institute. Available at: <https://www.cancer.gov/publications/pdq/information-summaries/genetics/bhd-syndrome-hp-pdq>. Accessed 26/8/2024. [PMID: 33724752]

Published October 2023

Clinically reviewed by Prof Neil Rajan and Dr William Fostier July 2024.

Next due for review July 2027.

We are always grateful to receive photos of skin bumps on BHD patients to add to our resources. We know skin bumps look different on different types of skin. We especially are looking for photos of skin bumps in non-white skin. If you wish to add yours, please email us at contact@thebhdfoundation.org. Thank you

If you would like to get in touch with the BHD Foundation, please email our team: contact@bhdsyndrome.org

For more information about our work and BHD, you can visit our website: www.thebhdfoundation.org