

## LICHEN PLANUS

### What is lichen planus?

Lichen planus is an inflammatory condition that can affect the lining of the mouth as well as the skin. The cause is not fully understood. It is common and affects up to 2% of the population. Lichen planus is most frequent in middle age and women are affected slightly more frequently than men. Although there is no known cure, treatment can be given to make the symptoms better

### What does it look like?

In the mouth lichen planus is usually found on the inside of the cheeks and on the side of the tongue although it can also affect the gums and roof of the mouth. Usually lichen planus has a lace-like pattern of streaky white patches that occasionally can be thickened. Often the patches are symmetrical, i.e. affect the same site on different sides of the mouth. Sometimes lichen planus may be associated with red patches or sores.

### What lichen planus is not!

- It is not cancer.
- It is not inherited, i.e., passed on from your parents.
- It is not contagious, i.e., you cannot "catch it" from someone who has it or give it to somebody else.
- It is not related to nutrition although some foods you eat can make the patches of lichen planus sore.

### How is lichen planus diagnosed?

The appearance of lichen planus is usually typical and can be diagnosed by an experienced doctor just looking inside your mouth. The diagnosis sometimes needs confirmation with a biopsy (i.e. removal of a small amount of tissue which can then be looked at closely under a microscope).

### How is lichen planus treated?

If lichen planus is not causing you any problems it does not require treatment although it may be kept a close eye on. If lichen planus is causing you problems such as soreness, treatments can be given to lessen the symptoms. Usually these are given directly on the affected areas (topically) rather than having to take tablets to swallow.

### Is there anything else I can do?

- You may find it helpful to keep a diary and look for trigger events if you have a flare-up of symptoms. These flare-ups may be related to particular foods, stress or local trauma.
- You may find it useful to change to a milder form of toothpaste. It is important to maintain good hygiene in the mouth.



- Some lichen planus can be related to amalgam (metal fillings). If this is the case in you, it maybe suggested that a filling is replaced.

### **Will I always have lichen planus?**

This is difficult to say. Some people suffer for only a few months before their symptoms settle down. Others may suffer for several years. Once the symptoms disappear they may or may not return at a later date.

**Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery** is the last of the nine disciplines of the Senate of Surgical Specialties of the Royal Colleges. It was formally included in 1994.

Maxillofacial Surgeons are the specific experts on the diseases affecting the mouth, face, jaw, and neck. As a result of their unique dual training they are best equipped to diagnose and treat symptoms, pathology, deformity and trauma affecting this complex area in a comprehensive manner.

There is an extensive overlap of domain with Plastic and ENT Surgery Thus it becomes prudent to create patient awareness about the perviews of the rich and growing speciality of Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery.

Here are some of the surgeries performed by our team at Kolkata over last few years. Wc hope the pictures would be self-explanatory.

### **Who would need to see a Maxillofacial Surgeon?**

- Individuals who have suffered any facial injury due to a punch or a fall or a major road traffic accident. And also those seeking corrective surgery for deformities arising out of untreated old injuries.
- Individuals requiring changes of the way their faces look. The commonest facial deformities are prominent or too receding Jaws (upper/lower). These groups of people also suffer from abnormality of the way their teeth meet.
- Individuals suffering from jaws joint pain, clicking, locking and inability to open the mouth. Most common chronic facial painful conditions are jaw joint related.
- Any one noticing a lump or bump on the face, the jaw or on the neck just below the jaw. Also lumps, bumps, ulcers, red or white or patches inside the mouth need at tent ion of a Maxillofacial Surgeon only.
- Any one suffering from localized or spreading infection of mouth, face or neck.
- Individuals who need removal of wisdom teeth and those looking for dental implants.
- Individuals having underlying medical conditions like heart, liver or kidney problems, diabetes, neurological conditions etc. and requiring dental extraction under special care.
- Individuals requiring surgery for any jaw cyst or tumour.



- Individuals requiring surgery for any jaw cyst or tumour.
- Any one waiting to have their oral screening for cancer or pre-cancerous conditions and ones diagnosed to be cancer of the mouth.
- Children with birth defects of face and mouth including cleft lip and palate.

**All enquiries and appointments** 98300 80174 / 9903985845

Courtesy: BAOMS Patients Information Leaflet

