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KELOID POST COMBUSTIONEM

KELOID

Synonyms: Cheloid; Kelis; Kelos.

Keloid is a benign connective tissue new growth, a peculiar hypertrophy of the fibrous tissue of the corium following some injury to the skin. In those who are susceptible to this development an extremely slight hurt such as a contusion, a scratch or the bite of an insect may be sufficient to start a growth. Such injuries are easily overlooked or forgotten, and formerly a distinction was made between so-called spontaneous or idiopathic, and secondary or cicatricial keloid. The development of keloid in recent scars is not uncommon. Sometimes the growth does not include the entire cicatricial area, more often it passes the limits of the scar and invades surrounding tissue. The tumor begins as one or more small, smooth, firm, pink, slightly elevated, round or oval nodules which enlarge gradually and sometimes require months or years to attain conspicuous dimensions. In its growth the tumor may assume almost any shape. It rarely reaches a height of more than an inch, but it may cover an area of a square foot or more. Most of the growths are only a few inches in diameter. A marked peculiarity of keloid is its tendency to send out clawlike prolongations, and often to cause a slight puckering of the normal skin about its periphery. The outline is always sharp, the border may be sloping or perpendicular. The surface is smooth, but often irregular; it is generally

devoid of hair. The epidermis may appear slightly tense and glossy. The pinkness is due to the presence of dilated blood vessels; occasionally these are absent, and then the color is that of the normal skin, or slightly paler. After an indefinite period growth ceases and the tumor remains almost unchanged for the rest of a lifetime. Ulceration or malignant degeneration does not occur. In a few cases there has been some involution. Keloid is not infrequently multiple but there are rarely more than a dozen tumors. The favorite location of the growth is on the chest over the sternum. Negroes are much more prone to the disease than whites, and in them the tumors are not uncommon on the face, especially on the ear lobes of women who have had their ears pierced for earrings. The disease is rare before puberty and in old age. Subjective symptoms are usually trivial or absent, but at times the growths are the seat of tingling and burning or even of severe pain. **TREATMENT:** The tumors almost invariably return after removal by the knife or destruction with caustics. Frequently repeated exposures to the X-rays, carried to the point of producing a mild erythema, have caused the disappearance of several keloids after one to six months. It is not often that a cocain or belladonna ointment need be applied to relieve pain.