

Treatment overview:

- insufficient evidence to show clear results in treatment of lichen planus, even for drugs that have been considered standard of care ([Arch Dermatol 1998 Dec;134\(12\):1521](#) in [Am Fam Physician 1999 Mar 15;59\(6\):1647](#))
- average 4-12 month course of medication
- alternative - UV light

Medications:

- topical steroids
 - mild-moderate steroid creams
 - 1-2% hydrocortisone
 - 0.1% triamcinolone acetonide (Kenalog)
 - 0.1% betamethasone valerate (Valisone)
 - if marked
 - 0.05% fluocinonide (Lidex cream)
 - 0.05% triamcinolone acetonide {Aristocort discontinued (Monthly Prescribing Reference 1999 Dec;A-42)}
 - topical ultrapotent corticosteroid reported to relieve symptoms in erosive lichen planus
 - prospective study of 114 adult women with erosive lichen planus of vulva followed mean 72 months
 - mean age at symptom onset 57 years
 - 89 women treated with topical ultrapotent corticosteroid, of whom 63 (71%) were symptom-free
 - 10 women (9%) had complete resolution of clinical signs except scarring
 - 57 women (50%) had resolution of erosions
 - Reference - [Arch Dermatol 2006 Mar;142\(3\):289](#)
- alternatives - systemic steroids, griseofulvin
- isotretinoin (Accutane), etretinate (Tegison) and tretinoin (Retin A) have been used (Cortlandt Forum 1997 Mar;10(3):152,109-48)
- discussion of cyclosporine in treatment of lichen planus can be found in [Mayo Clin Proc 1996 Dec;71\(12\):1182](#)
- systematic review provides only weak evidence for superiority of assessed interventions over placebo for palliation of symptomatic oral lichen planus; 9 trials reviewed covering cyclosporines (mouthwashes), retinoids, steroids and phototherapy; systematic review last updated 1998 Dec 4 ([Cochrane Library 1999 Issue 2:CD001168](#))
- **pimecrolimus 1% cream reported to be reduce clinical score in oral erosive lichen planus (level 3 [lacking direct] evidence)**
 - based on small randomized trial with differences attributable to baseline differences
 - 12 patients with oral erosive lichen planus and clinical score > 3 (on 12-point scale) were randomized to pimecrolimus 1% cream vs. placebo twice daily for 4 weeks
 - comparing pimecrolimus vs. placebo
 - mean clinical score 6.83 vs. 4.67 at baseline
 - mean clinical score 3.33 vs. 3.33 on day 28
 - all patients in pimecrolimus group whose condition improved subsequently relapsed within 1 month after treatment
 - Reference - [Arch Dermatol 2007 Apr;143\(4\):472](#)

- **topical tacrolimus reported to improve chronic erosive oral lichen planus ([level 3 \[lacking direct\] evidence](#))**
 - based on case series
 - 10 patients with refractory erosive oral lichen planus were treated with open-label tacrolimus 0.1 mg/100 mL distilled water mouthwashes 4 times daily for 6 months
 - 2 patients dropped out due to non-compliance
 - 7 patients had decrease in symptoms
 - Reference - [Arch Dermatol 2002 Oct;138\(10\):1335](#)

Other management:

- extracorporeal photochemotherapy used successfully in 7 patients with chronic erosive lichen planus of mucous membranes ([Lancet 1998 Mar 14;351\(9105\):805](#))