



“What is this white patch?”

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A 40-year-old female presents with a white patch in the popliteal fossa for the past two years. She has smaller versions of this on her fingers and ankle. These lesions are asymptomatic. She has a history of thyroid disease and a family history of diabetes.

1. What is the most likely diagnosis?

- a) Tinea versicolor
- b) Pityriasis alba
- c) Post-inflammatory hypopigmentation
- d) Vitiligo
- e) Nevus anemicus

2. What is the most common location for this lesion?

- a) Knees
- b) Face
- c) Neck
- d) Ventral wrist
- e) All of the above

3. How could you manage this lesion?

- a) Potent topical steroids
- b) Topical calcineurin inhibitors
- c) Phototherapy
- d) Systemic steroids
- e) All of the above

Vitiligo is a progressive leukoderma with depigmentation of the epidermis. The disposition for vitiligo appears to be inherited. It affects 1% to 2% of the population with an equal gender distribution and most common onset between 10- to 30-years-of-age. Vitiligo is generally asymptomatic and



Figure 1. White patch behind knee.

appears as sharply defined patches with increased prominence when the surrounding areas receive a tan (in the summer). The most commonly affected areas are the face, neck and scalp; other areas affected include the bony prominences, distal phalanges and ventral wrists, as well as around the orifices. Several theories as to the cause of vitiligo have been proposed, but there is no clear answer. A Wood's lamp examination of the skin can be helpful in solidifying the diagnosis and ascertaining extent of involvement. Due to the association with other autoimmune conditions such as thyroid disease, diabetes mellitus, pernicious anemia and Addison's disease, blood tests may be ordered.

The response to therapy is highly variable and includes potent topical steroids, topical calcineurin inhibitors (e.g., tacrolimus) and phototherapy. Uncommonly, systemic steroids may be used. In extensive cases, depigmentation of the entire skin may be necessary. **Dx**

Answers: 1-d; 2-e; 3-e

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