

Keratosis Pilaris (KP)

What is it?

Keratosis pilaris is a common skin variant that usually occurs on outer areas of the upper arms, thighs, buttocks, and cheeks. It looks and feels like rough, small bumps. They might be the same color as the skin or slightly red. Keratosis pilaris can be itchy, but it is harmless and should not cause pain. It bothers some people because of how it looks.

What causes it?

It tends to run in families, and it usually is seen in people with sensitive or dry skin. It is usually caused by a plug of dead skin cells that forms around a hair follicle. These “plugs” give the skin a sandpapery or “chicken skin” feeling. Keratosis pilaris is usually worse during the winter months. Often, the skin around the bumps is dry.

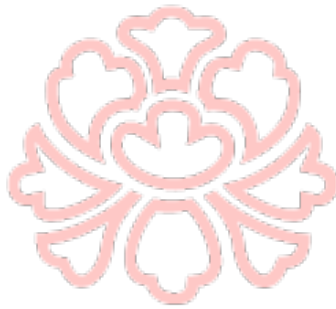
How do you treat it?

There is no cure for KP. Avoiding things that dry out the skin (like long, hot showers and harsh soaps) and using moisturizers on your skin every day will help. This does not usually make the bumps go away completely, but it often improves the way they look.

- Moisturizers
 - For many people, using a non-irritating lotion or cream will help enough. You should use a moisturizer 2 times per day, including right after bathing. Examples of moisturizers to try are [Vaseline](#) or [Vanicream](#).
- Peeling lotions or creams
 - Mild peeling creams may be helpful to prevent skin plugs from forming. You can buy some of these at the drugstore.
 - [Gold bond rough and bumpy](#)

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- [Cerave SA](#)
- Occasionally I will recommend a mild retinoid such as [adapalene](#) (Differin) to help facilitate this peeling, followed by a low potency topical steroid to improve any irritation or redness.



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