

# Lichen simplex chronicus

**Lichen simplex chronicus (prurigo nodularis)** is a secondary skin disease caused by chronic scratching. The primary change is any itching with an urge to scratch. Chronic mechanical irritation of the skin gradually leads to thickening and other changes (*lichenification*).

## Clinical picture

The lesions are usually scaly, thickened, with moderate erythema and relatively well circumscribed. Secondary changes (lichenification, excoriation and crusting) are common. A raised itchy nodule is usually referred to as prurigo nodularis.

## Histopathological picture

The main histopathological finding is distinct psoriatiform acanthosis. Hyperkeratosis is common, sometimes massive. Hyperkeratotic changes can have the character of orthokeratosis or parakeratosis. Spongiosis is usually only minimal and focal, and may be completely absent. Beneath the epidermis there can be varying degrees of fibrosis.

## Links

### Literature

- MILLS, S.E.. *Sternberg's Diagnostic Surgical Pathology*. 5. edition. Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 2012. ISBN 9781451152890.
- HOGAN, DJ – MASON, SH – HRUBY, SH. *Lichen Simplex Chronicus* [online]. Medscape, [cit. 24.2.2015]. <<https://emedicine.medscape.com/article/1123423-overview>>.



Macroscopic picture of lichen simplex chronicus on the shin



Microscopic image, HE staining