



## Jeff Donovan MD PhD FRCPC

*Dermatologist, specializing in hair loss*

---

750 West Broadway Suite 905 - Vancouver BC V5Z 1H8

Phone: 604.283.9299 Fax: 604.648.9003

Email: [vancouveroffice@donovanmedical.com](mailto:vancouveroffice@donovanmedical.com) Web: [www.donovanmedical.com](http://www.donovanmedical.com)

### **Acne keloidalis nuchae (AKN)**

#### **What is AKN?**

- This is a scarring process that occurs on the back of the neck
- The condition occurs most commonly in young black men but can occur in any patient (even women)
- It consists of itchy bumps. It can also be painful and drain fluid

#### **What is the cause of AKN?**

- The **exact cause is not known** but it is thought to be due in part to the inward growth of curved hairs.
- This may be due to short hair cuts or chronic irritation from collared shirts or athletic gear

#### **How is the diagnosis made?**

- Generally the diagnosis is made clinically (with examination of the patient)
- If there is any fluid draining, a swab will be taken

#### **How is AKN treated?**

- It is advisable to try to avoid wearing your hair too short.
- Growing it out a bit can be very helpful. It can also be helpful to avoid wearing tight fitting collared shirts as much as possible

**One or more of the following may be prescribed:**

- 2 % clindamycin powder in DILUSOL
- 2 % hydrocortisone cream
- Short term use of topical steroid such as Clobetsol cream
- Tretinoin 0.01 % or 0.025 % cream with a topical steroid is often a useful combination
- Topical chloramphenicol has been effective and can be prepared by adding 500 mg to 30 g of fluocinonide cream
- Antibiotic pills such as doxycycline can also be used if a lot of drainage is present
- Sometime injection of steroids can be performed, sometimes with shaving off of the bumps before injecting the steroids. You need to be aware the lightening of the skin can sometimes occur for a period of 6-12 months with steroid injections
- Sometimes deep punch excisions can be done and closed with silk suture or excised and left to heal on its own
- If AKN is very troublesome and resistant to treatment, Accutane can be prescribed.

