Erythema Nodosum

Erythema nodosum is also called "painful red nodules on the legs". Symptoms can include sudden onset of fever, fatigue and joint pains. Red, deep, tender, raised, bruise-like bumps form on the shin, or sometimes on the arms or trunk. The skin over the bumps is usually shiny. The symptoms usually last 1-2 weeks. The symptoms usually improve once the cause is treated. This illness may be caused by strep or fungal infection, drug reaction, pregnancy, or other medical conditions. Treating the cause is important to early recovery. Erythema nodosum occurs at any age and in both sexes but more often in young adult women.

Erythema nodosum is not a skin infection. It is a reaction to something internal. In most cases the illness and bumps go away with treatment. You should avoid any medicine that may have caused this reaction. Antihistamine drugs, anti-inflammatory drugs or cortisone medicine may be prescribed to relieve symptoms. SSKI drops (Pima) taken with juice at breakfast, lunch and dinner may have an anti-inflammatory effect and speed the healing. Bed rest and limiting vigorous exercise help to shorten the course of erythema nodosum. Elevation of the affected limb also helps in recovery.

As the condition gets better, the bumps flatten and your skin may heal with temporary bruise marks. These dark marks will clear up in several months and they are a good sign that your skin is healing.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- Your condition worsens, or if you have more severe symptoms such a high fever, sore throat, or repeated vomiting.

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