

DEFINITION

1. **Ichthyosis** is the name given to a group of disorders characterized by a generalised persistent non-inflammatory scaling of the skin surface.

CLINICAL MANIFESTATIONS

2. In ichthyosis, the surface of the skin is affected and shows scaling and abnormal desquamation (peeling), mostly on the extensor surfaces. The skin remains of normal thickness. The degree of severity varies and there may only be slight roughening of the skin surface.

AETIOLOGY

3. Ichthyosis may be inherited or acquired.
4. **Ichthyosis vulgaris** is a term given to a group of disorders that appear to have different aetiologies but a common pathophysiology. Many of the ichthyoses in this group are genetically determined.
5. **Acquired ichthyosis** occurs in association with certain forms of malignancy, leprosy, gross nutrition deficiency or other systemic disorders. The aetiology in these cases is that of the underlying condition.

CONCLUSION

6. The term **ichthyosis** describes a group of skin conditions characterized by scaling. The condition may be inherited or acquired, the latter occurring in association with other diseases.

REFERENCE

Griffiths W A D, Leigh I M and Marks R. Disorders of Keratinization – Ichthyosis. In: (Eds) Champion R H, Burton J L and Ebling F J G. Textbook of Dermatology. Oxford. Blackwell Scientific Publications. 5th Ed. 1992:1329-1349.

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