



## How is lichen planus diagnosed?

The appearance is usually typical and can be diagnosed by an experienced doctor just by looking inside your mouth. The diagnosis sometimes needs to be confirmed with a biopsy (removal of a small amount of tissue, which will be looked at closely under a microscope). The biopsy is carried out in the Maxillofacial Department under local anaesthetic (the area is numbed but you are awake) as a minor oral surgery procedure. Your doctor will discuss this with you at your outpatient appointment.

## How is lichen planus treated?

If lichen planus is not causing you any problems it does not need treatment, although you may be kept a close eye on. If lichen planus is causing you problems, such as soreness, then treatments can be given to make the symptoms better. Usually these treatments are mouth rinses or tablets.

## Is there anything else I can do?

- You may find it helpful to keep a diary and look for trigger events if you have a flare-up of symptoms. These flare-ups may be related to when you eat particular foods or are stressed.
- You may find it useful to change to a milder form of toothpaste, but remember you must continue to brush your teeth as good oral hygiene is very important.
- Some lichen planus can be linked to amalgam (metal fillings). If this is the case for you, it may be suggested that a filling is replaced.

## Will I always have lichen planus?

This is difficult to say. Some people suffer for only a few months before their symptoms settle down, others may suffer for several years. Once the symptoms disappear they may or may not return at a later date.

## Further information

If you have any further questions or concerns, please speak to your GP.

**This leaflet has been produced with and for patients**

If you would like this information in **another language, audio, Braille, Easy Read, or large print** please ask a member of staff.

**Any complaints, comments, concerns, or compliments** please speak to your doctor or nurse, or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01227 783145, or email [ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net](mailto:ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net)

**Further patient leaflets** are available via the East Kent Hospitals web site [www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/patientinformation](http://www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/patientinformation)