**Seborrheic Keratoses**

With the passage of time, we all develop small harmless areas of thickened skin. These thickenings are known as "seborrheic keratoses" or "SK’s." Although your friends, relatives, and even some doctors might call them "moles," they actually are not related to true moles in any way.

**Where do they show up?**

SK's can show up anywhere on the body. The most common areas are the back, chest,

abdomen, face, arms, and legs. They can even show up on the scalp!

**What do they look like?**

SK's are usually perfectly round or oval-shaped. The surface is often rough and "warty." The colour can range from yellow, pink, or white to brown or black. They often look like they have been "stuck onto the surface of the skin like a piece of chewing gum.

**What causes them?**

SK's can come for a variety of reasons, including heredity, rubbing from your clothing, or even just the natural changes that happen in the skin after age 30. Unfortunately, there is no way to prevent new ones from coming.

**Are they dangerous?**

SK's are not dangerous in any way. They are not cancerous and never become cancerous in the future. Because the colour can be quite dark, many people worry about them and often confuse them for skin cancer. Even many doctors can confuse them for skin cancers! Your dermatologist can tell the difference between an SK and skin cancer by simply looking at it with the naked eye. Again, Sk's are not dangerous in any way.

**Can they be removed?**

Yes! It is easy for your dermatologist to remove any unwanted or unsightly SK's right in the office with minimal discomfort. It gets done on the first visit without the inconvenience of coming for a second appointment. There are many ways to remove these spots. The most popular solution is a spray of liquid nitrogen gas (frozen air). It creates temporary frostbite in the skin for about 10 seconds, after which the skin will sting for about 10 minutes. The next day, a scab will form, and when the scab falls off naturally in 7 to 10 days, the SK will fall off with it. Ask your doctor if this is the best treatment for you!