

# Nomenclature of Skin Lesions

MACROSCOPIC LESIONS	DEFINITION
01 Excoriation	Traumatic lesion breaking the epidermis and causing a raw linear area (ie., deep scratch); often self-induced
02 Lichenification	Thickened, rough skin (similar to a lichen on a rock); usually the result of repeated rubbing
03 Macule, Patch	Circumscribed, flat lesion distinguished from surrounding skin by color; Macules are 5 mm in diameter or less, patches are greater than 5 mm
04 Onycholysis	Separation of nail plate from nail bed
05 Papule, Nodule	Elevated dome-shaped or flat-topped lesion Papules are 5 mm or less across, while nodules are greater than 5 mm in size.
06 Plaque	Elevated flat-topped lesion, usually greater than 5 mm across (may be caused by coalescent papules)
07 Pustule	Discrete, pus-filled, raised lesion
08 Scale	Dry, horny, platelike excrescence; usually the result of imperfect cornification
09 Vesicle, Bulla, Blister	Fluid-filled raised lesion 5 mm or less across (vesicle) or greater than 5 mm across (bulla). Blister is the common term for either
10 Wheal	Itchy, transient, elevated lesion with variable blanching and erythema formed as the result of dermal edema
MICROSCOPIC LESIONS	DEFINITION
01 Acanthosis	Diffuse epidermal hyperplasia
02 Dyskeratosis	Abnormal, premature keratinization within cells below the stratum granulosum
03 Erosion	Discontinuity of the skin showing incomplete loss of the epidermis
04 Exocytosis	Infiltration of the epidermis by inflammatory cells
05 Hydropic swelling (ballooning)	Intracellular edema of keratinocytes, often seen in viral infections
06 Hypergranulosis	Hyperplasia of the stratum granulosum, often due to intense rubbing
07 Hyperkeratosis	Thickening of the stratum corneum, often associated with a qualitative abnormality of the keratin
08 Lentiginous	A linear pattern of melanocyte proliferation within the epidermal basal cell layer
09 Papillomatosis	Surface elevation caused by hyperplasia and enlargement of contiguous dermal papillae
10 Parakeratosis	Keratinization with retained nuclei in the stratum corneum. On mucous membranes, parakeratosis is normal.
11 Spongiosis	Intercellular edema of the epidermis
12 Ulceration	Discontinuity of the skin showing complete loss of the epidermis revealing dermis or subcutis
13 Vacuolization	Formation of vacuoles within or adjacent to cells; often refers to basal cell-basement membrane zone area