

# Keep your English up to scratch!...

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Dear readers,

Are you ready to brush up your dermatological English? It is our very great pleasure to present the nineteenth English corner based on **Spider angiomas**. Don't forget you can use a dictionary to help you with the text, and of course, you should visit our website at <http://anglaismedical.u-bourgogne.fr/> to work on your pronunciation or build your medical vocabulary. The site also includes a talking dictionary, medical videos, exercises, clinical cases, words and expressions for specialists...

## Spider angiomas



Spider angiomas are so called because they look like a spider with a large central body that has 'legs' radiating outwards<sup>1</sup>. The central body is a raised<sup>2</sup>

dilated blood vessel and the 'legs' are smaller dilated vessels branching off<sup>3</sup> the larger vessel. The whole<sup>4</sup> lesion can measure up to half an inch<sup>5</sup> in diameter. If you press on the angioma, with a glass, for example, the red will disappear, but will quickly come back when pressure is lifted<sup>6</sup> and the blood returns.

These lesions can occur<sup>7</sup> at any age but, are more frequent in children, older people and women. They generally affect the face, upper<sup>8</sup> chest and back and upper arms. Their cause is not precisely known, but they have been associated with high levels of oestrogen, liver disease<sup>9</sup> and thyroid problems, and may develop following exposure to extreme cold or the sun. Most people who develop these angiomas, however, are otherwise<sup>10</sup> healthy. Interestingly, they do not run in families<sup>11</sup>, so there is probably no genetic component.

Given the link with oestrogen, spider angiomas tend to affect pregnant women or women of child-bearing age<sup>12</sup> who

As mentioned above<sup>14</sup>, these angiomas are not generally a sign of illness, but may require treatment if they are unsightly<sup>15</sup> or upset<sup>16</sup> or embarrass the person concerned and cosmetic camouflage is insufficient.

In certain cases, spider angiomas may clear up<sup>17</sup> on their own<sup>18</sup>. If not, however, there are a number of treatments available<sup>19</sup>, including electrodesiccation, which involves delivering an electric current to the skin. The heat causes the abnormal vessels to dry up<sup>20</sup>, shrink<sup>21</sup> and eventually<sup>22</sup> vanish<sup>23</sup>. The downside<sup>24</sup>, though, is that it may leave scars<sup>25</sup>. Laser therapy has also shown good results; the beam<sup>26</sup> causes coagulation and shrinkage of the vessels and the risk of scarring is lower. One of the side effects is a dark patch<sup>27</sup> on the skin, but this will fade away<sup>28</sup> within a month or two. Finally, for deeper lesions, intense pulse light treatment has been shown to be effective.

Unfortunately, these treatments do not work in every case (efficacy ranges from 60 to 90%) and the angioma may recur especially if there is an underlying<sup>29</sup> disease that hasn't been satisfactorily controlled. Moreover, the treatments may hurt<sup>30</sup>, but generally do not require local anaesthesia. It is therefore important to think about the pros and cons before deciding whether or not this treatment is necessary.

1. away from the centre (= vers l'extérieur)
2. elevated (= saillant)
3. coming from (= sont des ramifications)
4. the entire (= la totalité de)
5. ≈ 2.5 cm (= un pouce)
6. removed (= relâchée)
7. appear (= apparaître)
8. superior part (= partie supérieure)
9. hepatic disease (= maladie hépatique)
10. apart from this (= par ailleurs)

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11. are not hereditary (= ne sont pas héréditaires)
12. able to conceive (= en âge de procréer)
13. taking a contraceptive drug (= qui prend la pilule)
14. previously (= ci-dessus)
15. unattractive (= disgracieux)
16. perturb (= déranger, perturber)
17. disappear (= disparaître)
18. spontaneously (= tout seul)
19. that can be used (= disponibles)
20. become dessicated (= s'assécher)
21. become smaller (rétrécir)
22. finally (= finalement)
23. disappear (= disparaître)
24. drawback, disadvantage (= inconvénient)
25. mark left after a wound (= cicatrice)
26. ray of light (= faisceau lumineux)
27. area (= tache)
28. gradually disappear (= s'estomper)
29. causal (= sous-jacente)
30. cause pain (= faire mal)

Exercise 1: Find the right animal to form a medical entity

Example: \_\_\_\_\_ angioma → spider angioma

hare, cat, chicken, buck, butterfly, bird, goose, cow, swine

1. African \_\_\_\_\_ fever
2. \_\_\_\_\_ scratch disease
3. mad \_\_\_\_\_ disease
4. \_\_\_\_\_ teeth
5. \_\_\_\_\_ lip
6. \_\_\_\_\_ flu
7. \_\_\_\_\_ bumps
8. \_\_\_\_\_ pox
9. \_\_\_\_\_ rash

1. African swine fever = fièvre porcine africaine
2. cat scratch disease = maladie des griffes du chat
3. mad cow disease = maladie de la vache folle
4. buck teeth = dents de lapin
5. hare lip = bec de lièvre
6. bird flu = grippe aviaire
7. goose bumps = chat de poule
8. chickenpox = varicelle
9. butterfly rash = érythème en papillon

Exercise 2: what are the opposites of the following words?

Example: above ≠ below

1. outwards
2. upper
3. inner
4. internal
5. high
6. bottom
7. distal
8. forwards
9. superior
10. upwards
11. over
12. inside

1. inwards
2. lower
3. outer
4. external
5. low
6. top
7. proximal
8. backwards
9. inferior