

# STRETCH MARKS - STRIAE

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## 1. PATHOPHYSIOLOGY

Stretch marks occur in the dermis, the resilient middle layer that helps the skin retain its shape.

Being constantly stretched over time, the skin becomes less elastic and the small connective fibres within it break.

Skin distension apparently leads to excessive mast cell degranulation with subsequent damage of collagen and elastin. The skin, so, tries to reinforce itself by increasing the amount of strong, supporting fibers.

As a result linear scars called stretch marks may form.

Striae distense are usually a cosmetic problem; however if extensive they may tear and ulcerate if an accident or excessive stretching occurs.

## 2. PHYSICAL

Early striae present as flattened thinned skin that have a pinkish tinge, being occasionally pruritic.

Over time, mature striae are white, depressed, irregularly shaped bands, parallel to the lines of skin tension.

Its natural evolution is similar to that of scar formation or healing wound.

They reflect the separations of collagen of the skin.

Found on the lower abdomen and thighs, hips, breasts, arms and buttocks.

## 3. CAUSES

No general consensus exists as to what causes the stretch marks.

A suggestion says they develop more easily in skin that has a high proportion of rigid cross-linked collagen, as occurs in early adult life.

**They often occur as a result of:**

- a. pregnancy
- b. lactation,
- c. weight gain
- d. weight lifting
- e. family ( the amount of stretch marks you will have is genetically decided for you)

## 4. TREATMENT and PROGNOSIS

- Acid ( TCA)
- Chemical Peels ( montly intervals)
- Pulsed Laser

All the above shows significant improvement regarding to skin texture, firmness and color. However, the best results were obtained with Mesotherapy treatment.

The protocol consists of:

mesotherapeutic injections with a mix of:

Vit. C 222mg/ml + Polidocanol 0,5% + Mesocaine 1% which are given in the striae (painful, but so far with the best results) in 10 sessions, 2 weeks apart.

In fact they do not ever go away entirely.

The key, however, is finding ways to reduce their appearance.



The earlier you begin treating stretch marks – when they are pink-red the more likely you are to diminish their appearance.

Once they begin to flatten and fade, the more difficult to treat they are.