

Sebaceous Cysts

People sometimes ask if there is anything can be done apart from surgery for these common cysts. Dr Jonathon Wright has found this treatment a treatment with SSKI (Saturated solution of potassium iodide) and DMSO (dimethylsulfoxide) will often clear sebaceous cysts in weeks to months. DMSO helps the iodine to be absorbed deeply. Mix an equal quantity of both (5 or 10mls should do) – this will initially get quite hot but then cool down in a few minutes. Rub the mixture in vigorously twice daily. With persistence the cyst will break down. This will work with sebaceous cysts but not lipomas (fatty lumps which can look similar). It also helps with Dupuytren's contracture and keloids where these can be rubbed in. It is worth monitoring thyroid function whilst using SSKI if treatment last more than a month or two.

SSKI is difficult to obtain in the UK. I would expect that higher concentrations of Lugol's iodine (5% Lugol's iodine contains contains 10% potassium iodide) would work in a similar way.

I have found this combination of Lugol' iodine and DMSO has helped with small sebaceous cysts.

For other skin lesions like actinic keratoses and basal cell carcinomas (rodent ulcers) see the skin tumour leaflet.