PIPADOR REVISION

MRCOG Part 1 Revision Notes

Lichen Sclerosus

PATHOLOGY • LECTURE 359

VISUAL EXAMINATION REVISION NOTES

2026 Edition

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MRCOG PART 1 REVISION NOTES | PATHOLOGY

Lichen Sclerosus

Aetiology, clinical features, histology, malignant risk and treatment of vulval lichen sclerosus

Autoimmune	Figure-of-8	≈ 3–5%	Clobetasol
Associations: thyroid, vitiligo, alopecia	Vulva + perianal	Lifetime SCC risk	Ultra-potent steroid

■ KEY FACTS: Learning objectives

- Describe the aetiology, clinical features and histology of lichen sclerosus.
- Describe the risk of malignancy and differentiated VIN.
- Describe treatment and follow-up (BAD guideline).

359.1 Pathology and clinical features

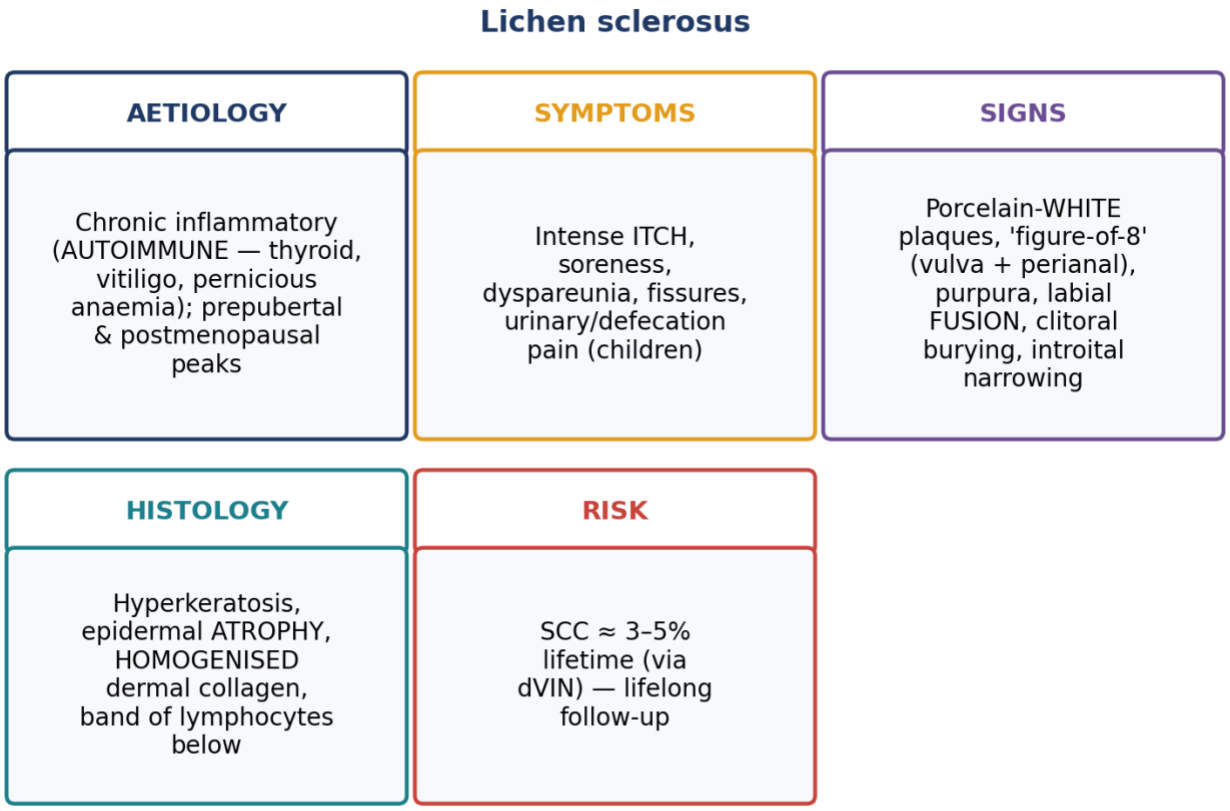


Figure 359.1 — Lichen sclerosus

- Affects all ages: prepubertal girls (may be mistaken for sexual abuse — purpura, fissures) and postmenopausal women
  - Also men (balanitis xerotica obliterans).
- **Spares the vagina** (unlike lichen planus); extragenital lesions in ≈ 10–15%.
- Scarring: loss of labia minora, clitoral phimosis, introital stenosis → dyspareunia.

359.2 Treatment and follow-up

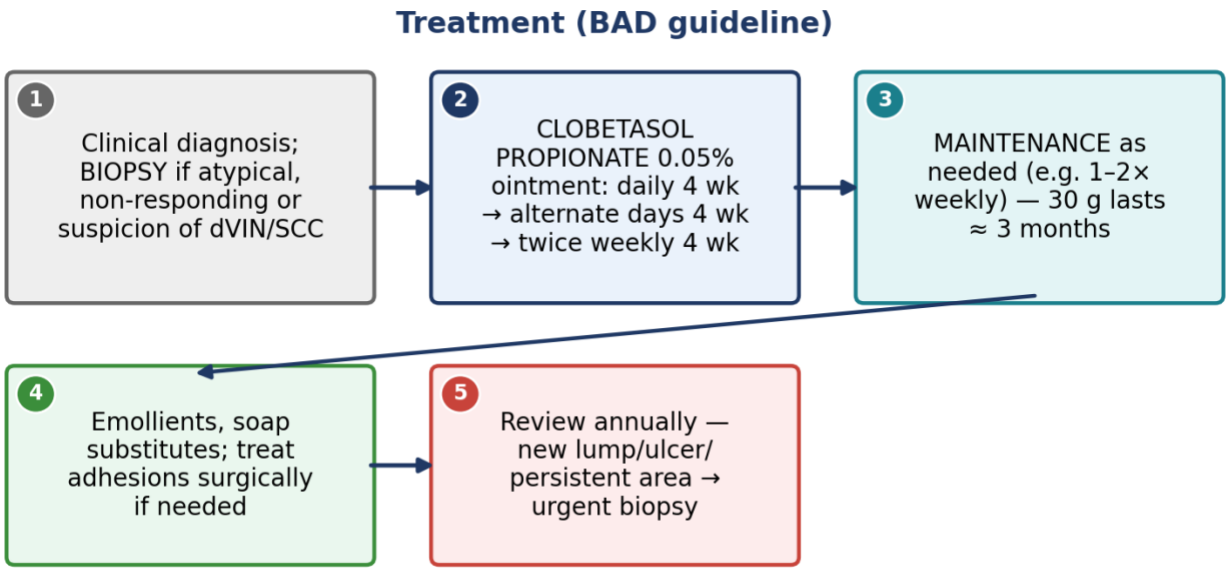


Figure 359.2 — Treatment

- Ultra-potent topical steroids are effective and safe on vulval skin when used correctly; reduce symptoms, halt scarring and probably ↓ SCC risk.
- Second-line: topical calcineurin inhibitors (tacrolimus — specialist), surgery for adhesions/introital narrowing after disease control.
- Women should be taught **self-examination** and to report persistent ulcer, lump or area not responding to steroids → urgent biopsy (dVIN/SCC).

359.3 Must-know summary

■ EXAM TIP

- Chronic autoimmune inflammatory dermatosis; white atrophic plaques, figure-of-8, scarring; spares vagina.
- Histology: hyperkeratosis, epidermal atrophy, homogenised collagen, lymphocyte band.
- SCC risk ≈ 3–5% via dVIN — lifelong follow-up and self-examination.
- Clobetasol 0.05% 12-week reducing regimen then maintenance.

■ MNEMONIC / MEMORY AID

LS — 'White, Wrinkled (atrophic), Weeping fissures, Watch for SCC'.