

## Pigmented lesion on lip

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The diagnosis of pigmented lesions is a daily challenge in general practice. Dermatoscopy can provide extra clues, but requires significant expertise. This series will help you hone your skills.

### Case presentation

Over a one-year period, a 27-year-old man noted a slowly enlarging pigmented lesion (0.4 cm diameter) on his right lower lip (Figure 1). His lips and face had numerous freckles. Dermatoscopy showed a partially asymmetrical, light tan coloured patch with an irregular brown to grey pigmented network that was indistinct at its edges (Figure 2). Lip biopsy showed an epidermis that had a broad and blunt pigmented epidermal rete ridge system (Figure 3). Melanocytes were present as single cells and in normal numbers. The underlying dermis contained focal melanin pigment.

### Diagnosis

The final diagnosis was a pigmented labial macule (labial melanotic macule).

### Discussion

Although the lesion was asymmetrical and dermatoscopy revealed a focally coarse pigmented network, the overall pattern and colour was limited – favouring a benign lesion. The broad and blunt pigmented rete ridges on biopsy mirror the network seen on dermatoscopy. Pigmented labial macules are quite common and may present as solitary or multiple lesions on the lower lip or oral mucosa. They are seen more frequently in freckled individuals. They usually remain stable and are not a melanoma precursor. The decision to remove this lesion was based on the history of progressive change.

### Keypoint

Dermatoscopy is helpful in evaluating the uniformity of pigmentary patterns in small lesions. MT



Figure 1. Tan coloured lesion on the right lower lip, with surrounding freckles.



Figure 2. Dermatoscopy demonstrating a broad and coarse pigment network with a light tan coloured background.

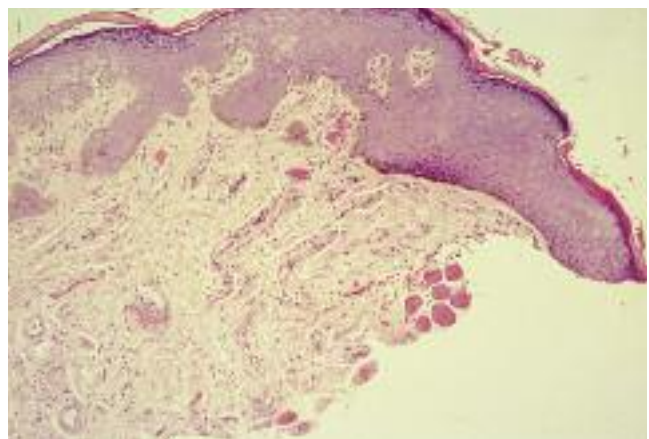


Figure 3. Lip biopsy showing broad pigmented rete ridges but no increased melanocytes.

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