Chapter 11
Skin Impairment

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is to be applied in assessing skin conditions. Chapter 17 (Disfigurement and Social Impairment) is also to be applied to the assessment of skin conditions if appropriate.

For any relatively minor skin condition, the major consideration is whether it occurs on a more or less permanent basis or whether it occurs intermittently. If the condition occurs on an intermittent basis, the application of Chapter 15 (Intermittent Impairment) is to be considered.

For a more noticeable skin condition, consideration must also be given to whether it affects function or causes disfigurement. If the skin condition is responsible for a discrete loss of function in another system, the appropriate system-specific table is to be applied. For example, if there were loss of hand function as the result of a skin condition, Chapter 3 (Spine and Limbs) is to be applied.

For very severe skin conditions, loss of function is generally measured by reference to the whole person and may need to be rated under Table 16.2 in Chapter 16 (Activities of Daily Living).

Other Impairment (Table 11.1)

Table 11.1 lists specific impairment ratings for a variety of skin conditions based on inconvenience. One rating only is to be made from this table for any combination of conditions. When more than one criterion is applicable, that associated with the higher rating is chosen.

Impairment ratings from Table 11.1 are not to be combined with ratings from tables for loss of function for the same condition. If ratings can be made from more than one table the higher rating is to be chosen.

Reference to disfigurement is found in Chapter 17 (Disfigurement and Social Impairment).
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Calculation of the impairment rating for skin conditions

Follow the steps below to calculate the impairment rating from accepted skin conditions:

(Each step is elaborated in the following pages.)

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Step 1: Establish whether the skin condition causes any loss of function.

Skin conditions may cause loss of function of hands by interfering with movement or sensation. They may cause loss of function of joints as a result of scarring and contractions which may limit or interfere with the movement at the joint. Skin conditions may cause conditions of the eyelids (for example, ectropion or entropion, or difficulties in closing or opening the eyes).

If any such effect of the accepted skin condition exists, this should be confirmed before applying Table 11.1.

Step 2: Calculate the impairment rating for the total functional loss from any accepted skin condition.

Depending on its nature and extent, functional loss may be assessed by:

- applying Chapter 16 (Activities of Daily Living);
- applying Chapter 15 (Intermittent Impairment), or
- applying one or more system specific tables.
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The rating obtained from the table applied in assessing functional loss may need to be modified by:

- applying Chapter 19 (Partially Contributing Impairment) if there is some contribution from a non-accepted condition; or
- applying Chapter 20 (Apportionment) if there is some contribution from another accepted condition.

If ratings from Chapter 16, Chapter 15 and one or more system specific tables are possible, all three are not to be given. Instead, all attributable system specific ratings are to be combined and compared with any attributable rating from Chapter 16 and from Chapter 15. The veteran is to be given the highest of the attributable ratings from Chapter 16, Chapter 15 or the combined system specific ratings as the functional impairment rating for accepted skin conditions.

### Step 3: Establish the Other Impairment rating for the accepted skin condition using Table 11.1.

Only one rating is to be given from Table 11.1 for any condition or combination of conditions.

### Step 4: Compare the impairment rating obtained in Step 2 with the impairment rating obtained in Step 3. Take the higher rating.

This step determines the final impairment rating for accepted skin conditions.

At Step 2 allowance was made for the effect of any non-accepted skin condition and of any accepted condition which is not a skin condition on the functional loss from the accepted skin conditions. Compare the result obtained in Step 2 with the result obtained in Step 3. Take the higher of the two ratings. This is the final impairment rating for the accepted skin condition.
### SKIN DISORDERS

<table>
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| **NIL** | Skin disorder causing symptoms which are easily tolerated, or are present only for a short time each day.  
Skin disorder that is symptomatic for less than one week of the year.  
Asymptomatic skin disorder without need for medication.  
Solar skin lesions not requiring removal during the year.  
Male pattern baldness. |
| **TWO** | Skin disorder than is symptomatic for less than four months of the year.  
Asymptomatic skin disorder but with need for medication.  
Solar skin lesions necessitating surgical removal (including cryotherapy and/or cautery) at least once in the year but less than four times a year. |
| **FIVE** | Any skin disorder, or combination of disorders, causing symptoms that are not easily tolerated, and that are present for a significant part of the day for at least four months a year, eg psoriasis; eczema; tinea with persistent pruritus, despite treatment.  
Noticeable skin disorder, or combination of disorders, on face or hands, of such degree as would cause embarrassment to most people in unfamiliar social contexts.  
Visible skin disorder, or combination of disorders, on a part of the body other than face and hands, of such degree as would cause embarrassment or considerable inconvenience to most people in domestic or intimate situations or as would cause them to curtail sporting or recreational activities.  
Solar skin lesions necessitating surgical removal (including cryotherapy and/or cautery) three times a year or more, or the removal of at least ten lesions over the year. |
| **TEN** | Alopecia (other than male pattern baldness).  
Skin disorders, or combination of disorders, resulting in significant loss of structural integrity of face, eg total loss of pinna, skin graft, scar following trauma or burns.  
Severe and persistent pruritus causing difficulty in concentrating and loss of sleep.  
Persistent skin disorder, or combination of disorders, resulting in continuous signs and significant symptoms of moderate degree, present for most of the time. |
| **FIFTEEN** | Permanent or persistent skin disorder or combination of disorders causing gross loss of structural integrity of face and extensive or extreme facial disfigurement.  
Severe and persistent ulcerative, weeping or suppurative skin disorders involving the greater part of both the face and the hands. |

*Only one rating is to be selected from this table for any combination of conditions.*

**No age adjustment permitted for this table**

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