

Nevus Sebaceus

What is a nevus sebaceus?

A nevus sebaceus is a growth on the skin. It is made up of sebaceous glands. These are glands in the skin that produce oils. It is normally present at birth. They usually occur on the scalp, face or neck.

The cause is not known and it is not inherited.

How is it diagnosed?

A nevus sebaceus is found by a physical exam. A skin biopsy may be needed.

How does it look?

A nevus sebaceus may be yellow, orange or pink during infancy and childhood. It may be round, oval, or long and thin. Sometimes they have unusual shapes. Most often they are smooth, hairless and flat. They may also be slightly raised and feel like “velvet.” The size may vary from very small to very large. Nevus sebaceus normally gets larger as your child grows. During puberty, the nevus sebaceus will change and look different. It gets raised and thick. Many small bumps and “finger-like” projections may be seen on the surface.



How does it affect my child?

As your child nears puberty, there will be a change in how the nevus sebaceus looks. Most doctors recommend that the growth be removed before your child is a teen. A small number may turn into skin cancer later in life.

How is it treated?

The nevus sebaceus is treated with surgery. A dermatologist or plastic surgeon can do the surgery before your child reaches puberty.

ALERT: Call your child’s doctor, nurse, or clinic if you have any questions or concerns or if your child has special health care needs that were not covered by this information.

This teaching sheet is meant to help you care for your child. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up.