



Congenital Pigmented Moles (Congenital Nevi)

While most moles develop later in childhood or adulthood, small congenital pigmented moles (brown birthmarks) are present in about 1% of all newborn babies. Giant congenital moles (larger than 8 inches) are far more rare, found in less than one in 20,000 newborn infants.

The risk of change to melanoma (a dangerous cancer) for persons with congenital pigmented moles may be increased, but the exact amount of that increased risk is controversial. Current thought is that small congenital moles (thumb-print size or less) do not incur additional risk over the risk associated with any other type of mole. There are many studies being performed currently to try and determine more precisely how much of a risk there is with larger congenital moles that are not “giant.” There is some controversy over whether these should be removed. It is felt by many pediatric dermatologists that observation is the preferred way to manage these moles.

It is important to inspect congenital moles on a monthly basis at home. We also recommend that the moles be observed by a dermatologist yearly. Signs of early change to melanoma include the development of irregular borders, changes in color or a change in the smooth surface of the mole. **See your dermatologist immediately if a change is noted within the birthmark.**

Giant Congenital Nevi:

Babies with giant congenital moles clearly have an increased risk of developing melanomas. Up to 20% of these giant moles become melanomas often during childhood. We generally recommend removal by a plastic surgeon beginning at three months of age (or earlier if we are concerned that melanoma is already present). There are a variety of surgical procedures that allow these large areas of skin to be removed such as skin grafts or “tissue expansion” techniques.

For Questions or Emergency Care:

Call the office at **601-815-3374**. You may need to speak with the doctor on-call.