

What are infantile hemangiomas?

Infantile hemangiomas are common birthmarks that appear on babies' skin after they are born. They appear in the first few weeks of life and often grow rapidly. They are not cancerous or painful. They are made of extra blood vessels in the skin. Sometimes people call them "strawberry birthmarks" because they can look like a bright red strawberry on the skin.

Most hemangiomas stop growing before the baby is 9 months old. Then, they slowly become less red and softer and flatter. Some go away in 2-4 years, but others take a lot longer. After they go away, there are often some changes left behind on the skin. This may look like a pink color or changes in skin texture. These changes are usually minor and not a concern.

DOES MY CHILD'S HEMANGIOMA NEED TO BE TREATED?

Most hemangiomas don't need any treatment. However, some hemangiomas do cause problems. For example, some hemangiomas can cause skin breakdown or scarring. If they are near the eye, they can cause poor eyesight. If on the lip, they can interfere with feeding. Speak with your doctor if your baby has a hemangioma at any of these sites:

- » on the lip
- » around the eye
- » anywhere on the face or front of the neck
- » in the diaper area
- » at any location if the hemangioma is large or rapidly growing
- » any hemangioma with broken skin or pain

Your doctor may start treatment right away. Treatments are most effective if they are started early.

HOW CAN HEMANGIOMAS BE TREATED?

- » **Timolol drops** can be applied to the surface of small hemangiomas.
- » **Beta-blockers** like propranolol or atenolol can be taken by mouth. They should be considered in babies with hemangiomas in the areas described above.
- » **Lasers** can help to heal ulcers in hemangiomas. Lasers are also used later in childhood to treat any redness or texture change that remains.
- » **Surgery** always leaves a scar. It is not used often for babies. Surgery is sometimes used later in childhood if there is scarring or extra skin still present.

For more information, visit:
hemangiomaeducation.org



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