

What are epidermal nevi?

They are harmless skin lesions or marks. If there is only one lesion, it is called an epidermal nevus. The lesions:

- May be present at birth or may appear later in infancy or childhood.
- Are normally yellow-tan to dark brown in color.
- Can be many different shapes, sizes and numbers.
- Sometimes cover a large area of the body.
- Feel anywhere from very rough to smooth to the touch.
- Can get itchy, irritated, or painful.
- Can grow in size, but often grow before the teen years.
- Are often harmless and do not become a health problem.

What causes this?

The cause is not known.

How are they diagnosed?

- They are diagnosed by the way they look.
- Seldom, a biopsy may be needed to make the diagnosis. A biopsy is when a small sample of the tissue is taken. It is looked at under a microscope in the lab.
- More tests may be done if other skin problems are a concern.

How is it treated?

Treatment is not often needed. Medicine or surgery is needed only if the nevus is red, swollen, sore or disfiguring.

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 sheet was created to help you care for your child or family member. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment and follow-up.