

Patient Information for Blue nevus

Overview

A blue nevus is a type of mole that appears blue. Blue nevi (plural) appear to be blue-gray or blue-black and are caused by melanocytes (cells that produce pigment) that group together in the middle layer of the skin. They look blue because of where they are located in the skin. This is a benign mole that is not cancerous. However, since these moles look similar to more dangerous moles, like melanoma, they are sometimes biopsied just to confirm the diagnosis.

Who's At Risk

Blue nevi are more common in women and individuals of Asian descent. They tend to first show up in childhood and adolescence.

Signs & Symptoms

These blue-gray or blue-black moles can appear anywhere on the body but are most common on the face, scalp, hands, and feet. They are usually no larger than a pencil eraser, appear round or oval, and are evenly colored.

There is a form of blue nevus called cellular blue nevus, which is typically larger than a blue nevus and is usually the size of a quarter. They tend to occur on the scalp, lower back, and buttocks. The cellular blue nevus has a very rare tendency to become cancerous.

There are no symptoms associated with blue nevus or cellular blue nevus.

Self-Care Guidelines

Since these moles can appear anywhere on the body, watch them carefully to monitor for any change in color, size, or shape, since these changes can be signs of a more concerning mole.

When to Seek Medical Care

Since blue nevi and cellular blue nevi look similar to the more serious skin cancer melanoma, a skin biopsy can be done to confirm the diagnosis if there is any doubt. Go to your doctor as soon as possible if the mole is growing larger or changing color or shape.

Treatments Your Physician May Prescribe

Your doctor may examine this mole under a bright light to make sure there is a blue shade to it. The doctor may then take a skin biopsy of it. This involves numbing the skin around the mole with lidocaine and then using an instrument to shave it off. If your doctor is more concerned about the mole, they may do an excisional biopsy, which involves cutting the entire mole out and closing the wound with stitches.