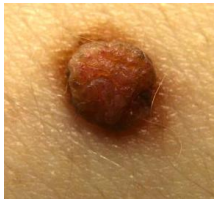
Mole, Fleshy

What is it?

- **Moles** – a dark brown spot, beauty marks, can be raised from the skin, contain dark hairs, may be dangerous, can appear anywhere on the skin, vary in size and shape, most appear during the first 20 years of life, sun exposure increases the number of moles, during pregnancy moles may get darker and new ones appear
- **Color of the Mole**- caused by melanocytes, special cells that produce the pigment melanin
- **Life Cycle of a Mole**: has it's on growth pattern, typical life cycle takes about 50 years, at first the moles are tan and look like a freckle, they may also be black, brown or pink in color; over time some get larger and have hairs; some get lighter in color and become raised, some do not change at all, some disappear, some develop a small stalk and as rubbed may fall off

- **Congenital Nevi**- moles that appear at birth, occur in about 1 in 100 people, more likely to develop into cancer than the moles that appear after birth
- **Dysplastic Nevi**- larger than average moles, irregular in size, dark brown center, uneven edges, heredity, a greater chance of developing melanoma (a serious form of skin cancer)



Facts:

- **Majority of Moles** – are non-cancerous and cause no problems
- **What Causes a Mole?**- when cells in the skin grow in a cluster instead of being throughout the skin and are called melanocytes

What can I do?

- **See your Health Care Provider**- if any mole changes in size, color, shape, bleeds, ooze, itches, appears scaly, or is painful; may need the mole removed or a biopsy to study to confirm that it is non-cancerous; check if any mold is 7 mm or larger
  - **Procedure**- is simple and harmless, sometimes a mole will reappear after it has been removed;
  - **To Remove a Mole**- numb the area and shave the mold off or cutting out the entire lesion and stitching the area closed

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