



Emergency Department

Umbilica**I Granuloma****What is an umbilical granuloma?**

An umbilical granuloma is an overgrowth of tissue during the healing process of the umbilicus (belly button).

It occurs in around 1 in 500 babies and is not painful.

The umbilical cord usually dries out and falls off within the first 14 days of life, after which the umbilicus rapidly heals. The granuloma forms during this healing period.

It may look like a soft-pink or cherry-red wet lump.

General care of the umbilicus (belly button)

- Keep the belly button clean and dry
- Clean the belly button with warm water (and soap if it gets soiled with nappy contents)
- Expose the belly button to the air by rolling back the top of the nappy.

How is an umbilical granuloma treated?

If there is an umbilical granuloma and no signs of 'When should I be worried' (see below), we suggest you either do nothing, or can try salt treatment (see below).

This has been found to be something safe and effective you can do at home.

Salt is thought to work by helping to dry out the wet overgrown tissues.

Your healthcare professional can suggest if salt treatment might be appropriate for your baby, and give you some gauze for doing the salt treatment. You can also buy more gauze from any pharmacy.

Very occasionally, silver nitrate treatment will be suggested instead. This must be done by a health professional and isn't advised in many cases anymore for lots of reasons.

How to use salt as a treatment

- Wash your hands first
- Use one hand to press gently on the skin around your baby's umbilicus (belly button) so you can see the middle
- With your other hand take a small pinch of table or cooking salt and put it onto the granuloma. Try not to get salt on the skin around the belly button.
- Cover it with a piece of clean gauze and hold it in place for at least 10 minutes (but no more than 30 minutes). It might be easiest to do whilst your baby is asleep
- Clean the area using a clean piece of gauze soaked in warm water

This can be repeated twice a day for at least 3 days. During this time you might notice it get smaller, change colour, dry off and then gradually heal.

If it has not responded to this treatment within a week please see your GP, midwife, health visitor or practice nurse. They can then decide if any further treatment is needed.

When should I be worried?

If your baby's belly button becomes:

- Very red, or the skin around it becomes red
- There is an offensive smell coming from it
- There is discharge that is green, or looks or smells like poo or wee
- Your baby is unwell with a high temperature over 38 degrees centigrade

Then you must contact a healthcare professional for advice, and NOT use any treatments such as the salt treatment on your baby.

This leaflet only gives general information. You must always discuss the individual treatment of your child with the appropriate member of staff. Do not rely on this leaflet alone for information about your child's treatment.

This information can be made available in other languages and formats if requested.

Alder Hey Children's NHS Foundation Trust
Eaton Road
Liverpool
L12 2AP

Tel: 0151 228 4811
www.alderhey.nhs.uk

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