Lasers are used to treat different types of skin problems, including warts, keloid scars and vascular birthmarks, such as port wine stains, hemangiomas and pigmented lesions. Each laser treatment takes a small amount of time. Several treatments may be needed to reach the desired effect. The wavelength of the laser light determines which target cells absorb that light. Therefore, laser light can be used to treat very specific types of cells that need treatment and not the “normal” skin cells.

Treatment with laser light feels like being “snapped with a rubber band”. A topical anesthetic may be used to make the procedure more comfortable.

A topical anesthetic may be prescribed by your child’s doctor to be applied at home on the day of the procedure or it can be applied in the office. Follow the instructions given for when to apply the cream at home. (See "Topical Anesthetic Creams" CARE CARD.)

Safety is an important aspect anytime the laser is in use. Everyone in the laser treatment room during the procedure will be required to wear protective goggles. Your child’s eyes will also be protected with goggles if he is old enough to keep them on. If he is too young to keep the goggles on, a moist washcloth will be kept over his eyes. Because of a small risk of fire, moistened dressings or washcloths will be used close to the laser treatment area. Any hair near the treatment area may need to be wet down before treating.

**After the laser treatment is completed:**

- Your child may complain of slight stinging or itching at the laser treatment site. This usually lasts a very short time.
- The skin at the site of treatment will be blue-gray or purple in color. This bruising will usually last about 7-14 days.
- Occasionally, there may be blistering of the skin at the treatment site.
- Scarring and skin pigment changes are rare.

**After-treatment care instructions:**

- Put Aquaphor® ointment or Vaseline® ointment on the treatment site twice a day for 2 weeks.
- You may put moist compresses or ice packs on the treatment area to decrease the stinging, swelling or discomfort if needed.
- Avoid sun exposure. Put sunscreen (SPF 30) on all exposed skin, especially on the laser treatment site. Wear protective clothing and/or a hat to help protect the skin if possible.
- If blistering occurs, notify the Dermatology Office. Then apply Polysporin® or Bacitracin® ointment to the treatment site twice a day as directed.
- You may give your child acetaminophen (Tylenol®) if needed for pain or discomfort. Follow the package instructions for the amount to give based on your child’s age and weight. Do not give more than 5 doses in 24 hours.
Call your child’s doctor at the Children’s Mercy Dermatology Office at (816) 234-3924 or the dermatology nurses at (816) 802-1404 if:

- Blisters appear at laser treatment site.
- You have questions or concerns regarding the laser treatment or your child’s response to the treatment.