Hemangiomas are the most common skin growths of infancy. They are a type of vascular birthmark. Hemangiomas usually are present at birth or develop within the first 2 months of life. Hemangiomas come in many shapes and sizes and can occur on many locations on the body.

The diagnosis of a hemangioma can usually be made by a doctor’s examination. Sometimes, an ultrasound or MRI may be needed to evaluate the lesion. Measurements and photographs of the lesion may be made at each office visit.

Hemangiomas grow quickly in the young infant. Hemangiomas usually stop growing by the age of one year. Most hemangiomas will go away without treatment over time. Half go away by themselves by age 5 and more than 95% are gone by age 9. Occasionally hemangiomas may become ulcerated (have a sore). If this happens, your child’s doctor will give special instructions for care.

Treatments:

- **Observation:** Your child’s doctor will check the hemangioma at each visit and monitor for any problems or complications.

- **Oral Steroids:** Your child will need close monitoring while on oral steroids.

- **Pulsed Dye Laser Treatments:** These treatments are mainly used for ulcerated hemangiomas and residual hemangiomas that have not faded completely. It may take several laser treatments to get the desired results. These treatments last only a few minutes each time and are scheduled about 1-3 months apart. A topical anesthetic cream can be placed on the skin for approximately 1 hour before the scheduled procedure time. This will make your child more comfortable. (See "Topical Anesthetic Creams" CARE CARD.) There will be some mild discomfort during the laser treatment. Follow-up care includes gentle skin cleansing, use of a moisturizer (Aquaphor® or Vaseline®) on the treatment site and avoiding sun exposure.

- **Surgery:** Occasionally, surgical removal may be recommended for hemangiomas that are not going away as expected. This is usually considered when your child is school age.

Your child will need regular monitoring to re-evaluate the progress of the hemangioma. It is very important to keep your child’s scheduled appointments.

**Call your child’s doctor or the Dermatology nurse at (816) 802-1401 if:**

- Your child’s hemangioma becomes ulcerated.

- You have questions or concerns about your child’s hemangioma or treatment.