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Spitz naevi

Spitz naevi (or Spitz's nevi) are skin lesions that usually affect the face or limbs of young children. They usually grow rapidly at first. After the initial growth period, they may remain static for years. However, they often disappear spontaneously after a period of time.

Spitz naevi have also been known as 'juvenile melanomas' because they may resemble [malignant melanomas](#) clinically and microscopically. However Spitz naevi are actually benign (non-cancerous) skin tumours.

What do they look like?

Spitz naevi are typically dome-shaped red, reddish-brown or darker papules or nodules up to one or two centimetres in diameter.

Spitz naevi



How do you get them and who is at risk?

It is not known why Spitz nevi occur. They are seen most often in children; 70% of cases diagnosed during the first 2 years of life, but they may also arise in adults. They are most frequently found in fair-skinned individuals (skin [phototypes](#) 1 & 2).

What treatments are available?

Because of the difficulty in definitively predicting the outcome of Spitz naevi, it is generally recommended that the lesions be cut out ([excised](#)).

Related information

References:

- Book: Textbook of Dermatology. Ed Rook A, Wilkinson DS, Ebling FJB, Champion RH, Burton JL. Blackwell Scientific Publications.

On DermNet NZ:

- [Birthmarks \(naevi\)](#)
- [Moles \(melanocytic naevi\)](#)
- [Congenital melanocytic naevi](#)
- [Blue naevi](#)
- [Halo naevi](#)
- [Freckles](#)
- [Melanoma](#)

Other websites:

- [Spitz nevus](#) – emedicine dermatology, the online textbook

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DermNet does not provide an on-line consultation service.
If you have any concerns with your skin or its treatment, see a [dermatologist](#) for advice.

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