

Hair Loss on the Scalp

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This 12-year-old boy was first noted to have an area of hair loss on his scalp as an infant.

What is your Diagnosis?

A nevus sebaceous is a hamartoma showing histologic evidence of follicular, sebaceous, and apocrine structures.

His lesion was relatively flat with little, if any, hair at birth. It is most commonly seen on the scalp and face, and less so on the neck and torso.

During childhood, it becomes more elevated. It presents as somewhat yellowish in colour in lighter skinned individuals and darker in dark skinned individuals (as is seen with this patient).

In adolescence, the surface changes further, becoming more pebbly or even verrucous in texture.

With a hamartoma, other substructures may become more prominent, such as a papillary syringomas or trichoblastomas. A trichoblastoma has been misinterpreted as a basal cell endothelioma (BCE). The true incidence of a BCE is rare, as is malignancy. Even with the low risk of a nevus



Figure 1: Hair Loss on the Scalp

sebaceous becoming a malignancy, it is usually the lesion's appearance that often dictates whether or not it should be totally excised.

Dr. Stanley J. Wine is a Dermatologist in North York, Ontario.

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