

Covering Your Birthmark (Part 1)

Volume 2, Issue 1

January 2003

© 2003 Birthmarks.com

Happy New Year from Birthmarks.com!

Happy New Year to our newsletter readers and PWS Community. 2002 was a great year for Birthmarks.com and we expect 2003 to be even better. One of our primary goals for this year is to connect people in the global PWS community. There are so many resources out there for PWS'ers to access and we want to centralize those resources, services and insights and make them available to you at one online destination... www.birthmarks.com

We have an impressive community of experts, medical professionals, corporations, services, and experienced PWS'ers that you can access every time you visit Birthmarks.com. We want to continue to build this community of interest and bring all the best there is to offer for you and your families.

Please continue to pass along our web address and newsletters to your pediatricians, your physicians and your friends. Let's get the word out so everyone can benefit from this information.

This Month's Topics...

The subject of this month's newsletter concerns covering (camouflaging) a Port Wine Stain. This issue includes:

- **The technical side:** Camouflage makeup available, application tips.
- **The personal side:** Pros and Cons. When or whether to introduce your child to makeup. Dependency concerns and long-term effects to be aware of.
- **The science:** noted researcher Dr. Stuart Nelson contributes an article about some of the latest research coming out of Beckman Laser Institute.

Want to contribute? We are always looking for contributors to share their insight, wit, wisdom, stories and experiences. Please contact us at Editor@Birthmarks.com if you would like to participate or if you know someone who would qualify as an "expert" contributor.

All back issues of this newsletter will be archived in Adobe PDF format and available for download at www.birthmarks.com/newsletter.cfm.

Inside this issue:

Getting Personal: The Camouflage Junkie	2
What The Experts Are Saying: -Susan Kirsch	3
Question of the Month	3
A Look Into the Possible Future of Port Wine Stain Laser Treat- ment J. Stuart Nelson, M.D., Ph.D.	4
Resources Available at Birthmarks.com	6
Monthly Sponsor Offers	6
Learn from Our Sponsors -The NeoStrata Co. -Covermark	7
Letters to the Editor	9
Events of Interest	10

Our Diamond Sponsors

J. Stuart Nelson, MD, Ph.D
Beckman Laser Institute
a national center for excellence

 **LUMENIS**
Enhancing Life. Advancing Technology.

 **COVERMARK®**

Getting Personal: The Camouflage Junkie

by Catharine "Cat" Fennell

PWS Newsgroup member and accredited Clinical Camouflage Technician

The subject of "camouflage" is one that is very near and dear to my heart. In fact, it is probably one of the most important things in my life. Something I think about and live with every single day. The first thing I did after graduating from University was to work for Dermablend, through the Canadian distributor Continental Cosmetics. It was a logical place for me, combining my business and marketing Bachelor of Commerce with my personal interest in Corrective Makeup and all it had to offer. I had been covering my birthmark every day from the time I was thirteen and had never looked back. Shortly after I joined Dermablend I went to San Francisco to be trained by one of the world's top Corrective and Paramedical Technicians and Therapists, Victoria Rayner. I took an intensive four-week program that trained me to apply corrective makeup to all types of congenital and acute conditions that caused discoloration. It was a wonderful experience and one that allowed me to broaden my perspective and technical ability.

I have since moved away from the cosmetics field but find myself always coming back to my personal interest in combining the art and science of corrective makeup. As a result of some personal research that I have been doing for my book, I found myself landing at www.birthmarks.com and am so glad that I did.

Despite what a big part of me my PWS is, I continue to conceal it each and every day. And, many people who are in my life are unaware that it exists. It is an



Cat with family

interesting contradiction and one that I wanted to share with other people with PWS's or parents of children who may be at the stage where they are considering covering their birthmarks with corrective makeup. I am very thankful that such high quality products are available to us today and that we have the choice to use them, or not. Without this choice, I would likely be a very different person today.

If I were going to do it over again though, I would probably do it differently. If I had a child with a birthmark (which I may), I would encourage him or her to cautiously pursue any concealing or removal procedures as an option, not a dependency. Over the last few months I have had the pleasure of speaking with

many people with similar life experiences and have been so very impressed with the way many people handle the use of corrective cosmetics. They cover the birthmark sometimes, and other times they don't. It is a wonderful balance that I hope to be able to achieve one day. I would characterize myself as having a "camouflage dependency".

"Avoiding a "camouflage dependency" is achieved by covering your birthmark, not your self"

I believe the long-term effects of a "camouflage dependency" can sometimes run as deep as the emotional scars that are inflicted by the unkind remarks and stares that come from those who are uninformed and sometimes insensitive.

Avoiding a "camouflage dependency" is achieved by covering your *birthmark*, not your *self*.

FAQs

Q: What is the connection between PWS and glaucoma?

A: Unless the PWS is near or bisects an eye there typically isn't any connection unless SWS is involved. If the PWS is near or bisects the eye then the odds for glaucoma increase dramatically. In a newborn intra-ocular pressure should be checked as soon as possible.

Q: Will the PWS recur even after laser treatments?

A: In almost all cases YES. Lasers only treat the symptom and not the cause of the stain. At this point in time, it is the best technology medical science has. After the initial set of treatments is finished and you and your doctor are satisfied with the results, a follow-up treatment is only needed when you feel the stain is darkening.

What The Experts Are Saying

Susan Kirsch, Camouflage Makeup Artist

Covering your birthmark is often stressful. The goal is to create as natural a look as possible given the type of birthmark you have. If you create a caked or unnatural coverage it will look worse and you will not realize the benefits of the makeup and will undoubtedly end up feeling more uncomfortable than anything else.

I believe that choosing the correct color match is a priority and having the right selection for different seasons to match the surrounding skin changes is really important.

The next consideration would be your application technique. Available natural light, or an artificial replica of natural light is imperative. Once you set yourself up in a comfortable, appropriately lit environment, you are ready to use the application technique that best suits the area you want to camouflage. For most birthmarks the two-color technique works the best. This involves blocking out the discoloration then adding the second color to match the surrounding skin.

This technique allows you to use less camouflage

Question of the Month

I've been reading a lot of PWS-list (newsgroup) material but I still have some questions:

1. Is port wine stain another name for "nevus flammeus"?
2. What is the difference between copper bromide laser and pulsed laser?
3. On what will it depend whether to treat the whole area of the stain or just a little spot of it?

I subscribed to the list a week ago and was happy to feel part of the group of parents who share the same aim: do the best for the benefit of the child born with PWS. We live in Croatia, Europe, and feel lack of information and possibilities of appropriate laser treatments. Very soon I'll send you my son's biography. In the meantime I'll wait for the answers to my questions. Thanks a lot!

-Mirna from Croatia

###

Editor: 1. "port wine stain" is a layperson's term for any simple surface vascular malformation --

makeup and get more coverage. Experimenting with different products will give you more choice. Do not think of this experience as wasting money. Nothing is a waste. Each new color or formula will teach you how to get closer to the look you will be happy with. Be open to trying something different and take care of the texture of your skin so that the camouflage makeup can blend naturally. If your skin is dry or flaky in the winter you cannot expect your camouflage to work the same way as in the summer.

Feeling confident enough to ask a relative or good friend how it looks is also helpful. Enjoy the technique of the application. Think of this experience as a painting where you are the canvas. If you put the effort into the creative aspect, you will enjoy the experience and get satisfying results.

###

Editor's Note: Birthmarks.com maintains an extensive listing of makeup products at <http://www.birthmarks.com/makeup.cfm>. Susan can be reached at makeupartistsusan@rogers.com.

but not a hemangioma. "nevus flammeus" is actually more typically spelled "nevus flammeus". A good definition link is: <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/0014410.htm>.

2. There's a very good article at our website describing the differences between the lasers (including yours in question) by noted expert Dr. Tina Alster. It can be found at: http://www.birthmarks.com/laser.cfm#Laser_Types.

3. Many things... cost, pain involved, time to treat, response to initial test spots on the lesion, ability of specific laser in question to do large areas in one session. Bottom line is this is an important issue to discuss with your doctor.

"We live in Croatia, Europe, and feel lack of information and possibilities of appropriate laser treatments"

A Look Into the Possible Future of Port Wine Stain Laser Treatment

When laser therapy was first introduced for the treatment of port wine stain (PWS), it was certainly an improvement over previous methods, and there was expectation that the laser would be successful for each and every patient. Unfortunately, that has not been the case. Some PWS patients have very good results after laser treatment while others see very little change. Why does this happen and can the success rate be improved?

When utilizing laser therapy for PWS, the physician must consider the following characteristics: size, color, anatomical location, and patient age. To date, none of these has been accepted as a reliable predictor of therapeutic outcome. Biopsy studies of PWS show normal skin overlying an abnormal network of dilated blood vessels in the skin. Skin pigmentation (color), as well as PWS blood vessel size and depth distribution, vary on an individual patient basis (see Figure 1) and even between different areas on the same patient.

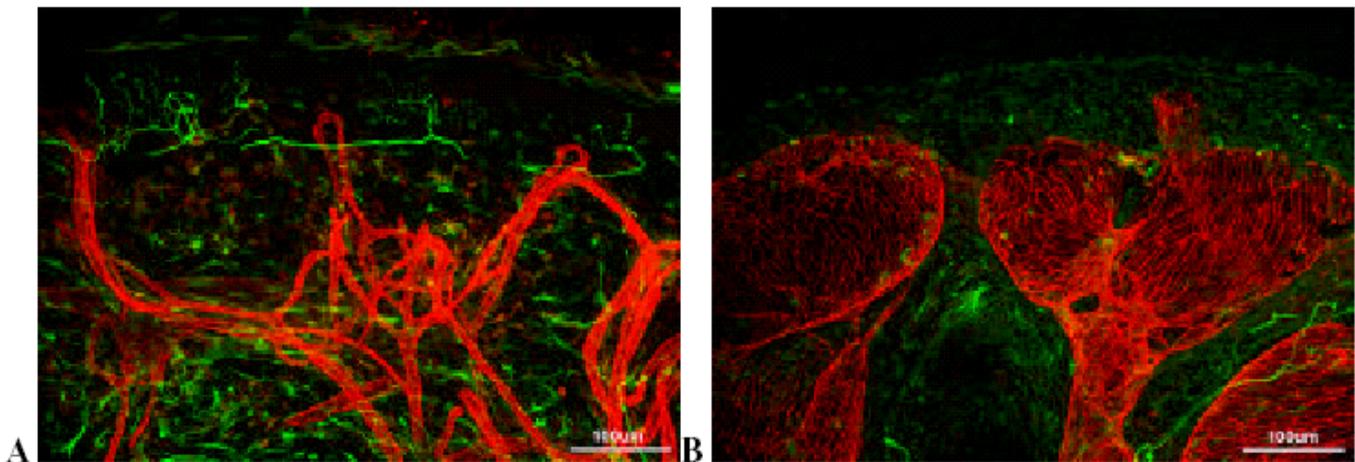


Figure 1: Biopsy studies of human skin with PWS from two different patients. Note the different PWS blood vessel geometry in each patient. Obviously the treatment protocol for each patient will be very different. Figure 1A is of a PWS with larger vessels while Figure 1B is a PWS with a branching network of individual, smaller vessels.

This is why selecting an appropriate PWS treatment protocol on an individual patient basis is so difficult. Moreover, the selection of an appropriate protocol has become increasingly more complicated as manufacturers introduced devices that allow the physician to vary several laser treatment parameters such as wavelength and pulse duration. In addition, cryogen spray cooling (CSC), which was developed to protect the skin from non-selective injury, introduced adjustable CSC spurt durations. So the physician faces a myriad of decisions in which he/she must determine which laser and its parameters will be the best solution for the individual patient's case.

Presently, all patients are treated with very similar laser parameters, selected based on the clinical judgment of the physician using visual cues. Unfortunately, the degree of PWS fading achieved following laser therapy is variable and unpredictable. It is thought that this occurs primarily because the physician is unable to select the optimal treatment parameters for a specific PWS lesion.

As a general statement, smaller blood vessels should be treated using shorter wavelengths while larger blood vessels should be treated using longer wavelengths. Given that one goal of treatment is the precise control of PWS blood vessel heating, the pulse duration of laser irradiation is just as important as optical and tissue factors. Thus, smaller blood vessels should be treated using shorter pulse durations while larger blood vessels should be treated using longer pulse durations. Spatially selective cooling can be achieved by CSC during PWS laser therapy. When a cryogen spurt is applied to the skin surface for an appropriately short period of time, CSC promotes rapid and spatially selective epidermal cooling without affecting the targeted blood

(Continued on page 5)

vessel temperature before the laser pulse is delivered. Optimal CSC parameters, which provide the highest level of epidermal protection and permit the use of higher light dosages, are very sensitive to skin thickness and PWS blood vessel depth. So for an optimal therapeutic outcome, CSC spurt duration should ideally be selected from knowledge of PWS depth and skin thickness for a specific lesion.

At the Beckman Laser Institute located on the campus of the University of California at Irvine, J. Stuart Nelson, M.D., Ph.D., and his research group are developing a targeted approach to the clinical treatment of PWS patients receiving laser therapy on an individual patient basis. Dr. Nelson and his research group are using a technique known as infrared tomography (IRT) to try to establish a specific guideline for physicians. The group has applied their prototype IRT system to imaging of PWS blood vessels in human skin. Using IRT, the team is photographing the skin temperature of PWS patients at intervals of a few milliseconds after the laser pulse is delivered. The process is painless and noninvasive. Using computer programs they developed, they are able to reconstruct in three dimensions what the PWS geometry looked like after each laser pulse. Figure 2 is an IRT image of PWS blood vessels in human skin.

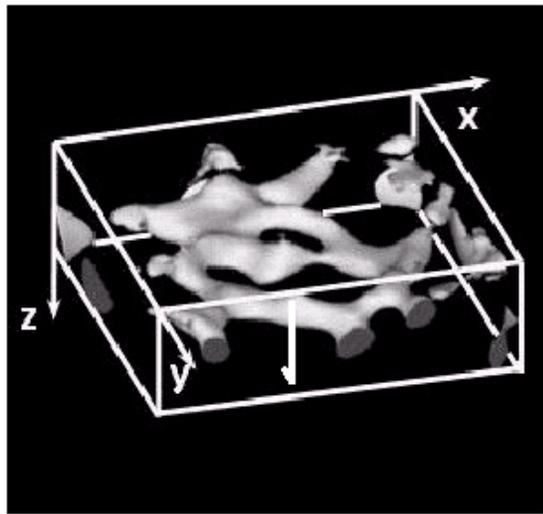


Figure 2: IRT image of PWS blood vessels in human skin.

Using IRT, Dr. Nelson and his research group hope to provide a practical methodology for PWS characterization prior to the beginning of laser therapy. Based on information provided by IRT, the following PWS characteristics may be determined: 1) maximum temperature increase in the normal skin overlying the PWS; 2) skin thickness; 3) PWS depth; and 4) sizes of the individual PWS blood vessels. Access to such knowledge will enable Dr. Nelson's group to investigate the relationship between characteristics of an individual PWS and its response to laser therapy. Moreover, such information will enable the attending physician to apply optimal treatment parameters (laser dosage, wavelength, pulse duration, and CSC spurt duration) for each lesion, thereby avoiding skin damage while at the same time maximizing destruction of targeted PWS blood vessels.

Armed with standard measurements along with a clear IRT image of the PWS vessels, it is hoped that the subjective aspects of laser therapy will be replaced with standard data to determine which laser to use and what settings are best in order to yield consistent optimum results for each and every PWS patient.

###

© J. Stuart Nelson, M.D., Ph.D.

Professor of Surgery, Dermatology and Biomedical Engineering

Beckman Laser Institute

1002 Health Sciences Road, East

Irvine, CA 92612, tel: (949) 824-4713 fax: (949) 824-8413, Website: <http://www.bli.uci.edu/>

Resources Available At Birthmarks.com

By Michael Steffano,
Founder of Birthmarks.com

The Birthmarks.com website, its related newsgroup, and this newsletter offer a consolidated source of information and community to those people whose lives are affected by all the varied types of birthmarks.

The website offers a varied set of resources, ranging from **Find a Doctor**, the largest online database of doctors providing treatment for vascular malformations, to **Makeup & Skin Care**, an extensive listing of concealment, or camouflage, cosmetics with product details, pricing, availability, and comments from people using them to cover up their birthmarks.

You will also find **Calico Corner**,



Michael with his wife
Catherine

read **Elizabeth's Story**, an online storybook recounting nine year-old Elizabeth's experience going for a laser treatment.

There is a wealth of information about **Laser Therapy**, along with anecdotes and advice in **Info & Opinions**. New parents should read **Parent's Primer**, a must-read for all those who have just had a baby with a birthmark.

a collection of stories, articles, and poems by people reflecting on living with a birthmark. Be sure to

"... you will also find *Calico Corner*, a collection of stories, articles, and poems by people reflecting on living with a birthmark."

If you sign up for the community **Newsgroup** you will have access to the **PWS Archives** which contain several years of threads on various topics, as well as photo-sharing, available through a unique software product created by Pixel Elite Technologies.

We are very excited about this newsletter, the newest offering to our community. I am pleased that you have had an opportunity to review this month's issue.

Monthly Sponsor Offers

Covermark - Diamond Sponsor

Birthmarks.com has joined forces with Covermark to offer you more ways to conceal your birthmarks, scars, port wine stains and other skin blemishes.

As a special Birthmarks.com visitor you will receive a 10% saving on orders* of \$15 or more placed before May 1, 2003. (To receive your discount use coupon code: bmcov02)

For further information or to speak to a Covermark representative, call COVERMARK toll free at 1 800 524-1120 or Shop Online for concealment products and kits - you'll love what you don't see!

*10% discount on orders of \$15 or more placed before May 1, 2003. Not valid for "Sample the Possibilities". To receive your discount use coupon code: bmcov02

<http://store.yahoo.com/covermark/birthmarks1.html>

The NeoStrata Company - Gold Sponsor

Birthmarks.com and NeoStrata are pleased to offer you the opportunity to purchase their line of Exuviance skin care products and CoverBlend concealing treatment cosmetics directly online from www.neostrata.com through a special Referral Support Program. This private and secure site is easy to navigate. For every product purchased through this program NeoStrata will contribute \$1.00 to Birthmarks.com and the PWS-list Newsgroup.

<http://www.birthmarks.com/neostrata.html>

Primary Color Foundations - Silver Sponsor

Primary Color Foundations Ltd. announces ColorTration, the new super concealing liquid makeup. This new product easily covers, conceals, corrects and camouflages any skin discoloration, imperfection or problem. Conditions like vitiligo, melasma, birthmarks, undereye circles, burn scars, spider veins, acne scars and even tattoos are completely concealed by the incredibly thin and totally opaque cover cosmetic. Samples may be ordered from their website.

<http://www.colortration.com/>

Learn From Our Sponsors

Lynda Wilson, VP Marketing



FINALLY, A CONCEALING MAKEUP THAT BECOMES YOUR OWN SKIN

CoverBlend by *Exuviance* Concealing Treatment Cosmetics conceals and corrects all types of visible skin imperfections (from minor flaws to major discolorations) while providing anti-aging treatment and sunscreen protection. It was developed by the NeoStrata Company, a medically-based dermatological company dedicated to the advancement of skin care also marketing the patented Exuviance line of treatment skin care products. All CoverBlend products are formulated with NeoStrata's unique Poly Hydroxy, gluconolactone, providing all the anti-aging benefits of an Alpha Hydroxy in addition to intense moisturization and antioxidant properties. It is suitable for even the most sensitive skin.

The CoverBlend line corrects, treats and protects with a range of products for both face and body including the Concealing Treatment Makeup for correcting imperfections on the face; the Multi-Function Concealer for spot areas on the face including dark eye circles; the Anti-Aging Finishing Powder to set the makeup with a flawless finish; and the Corrective Leg & Body Makeup conceals imperfections on the body, providing long lasting, full coverage even while swimming.

And, IT'S EASY!! The soft cr me makeup is simply "patted" over the area to be concealed right from the jar. No melting or messy powder needed. In fact, it's so easy, even a child can learn to apply their own "special makeup". To find out more, or to purchase call 1-800-225-9411 or visit www.neostrata.com.

CELEBRATE THE CHILDREN!

"Visible skin abnormalities can make the sojourn through childhood much harder. Self-consciousness and frequent social ridicule can dramatically impact on a child's self-perception and place them at risk for poorer self-image functioning."

Richard G. Fried, M.D., Ph.D.

Dermatologist/Clinical Psychologist

NeoStrata has launched a very important program for our children through a children's book, "Celebrate Me!" in efforts to aid in a variety of circumstances surrounding visible skin "imperfections" including;

- Fostering self-esteem through awareness and encouragement of differences and choices.
- Stimulating communication between adult and child regarding the child's "difference"
- Assessing the child's reactions to determine per-

ception of self-image

- Determining the appropriate timing for offering an option for concealing cosmetics

This is a communications tool that can be used over and over again both to solidify its message of fostering self esteem through awareness of differences and choices and during subsequent social situations and/or developmental milestones. The following are a couple of wonderful stories of self-image and self-discovery of three children (and a Mom) that say so very much about differing levels of awareness and readiness in these little ones' thoughts and actions.

The Magic Wand

At a patient support organization conference, I had a session where I was applying a concealing makeup on willing participants. A five year old, very precocious little boy was watching from afar with great apprehension as his grandmother moved him up the line for his "makeover". I asked him if he was ready to sit in my big chair, and I encouraged him to just feel the makeup on his fingers and if he then chose, I would apply to cover his port wine stain on his face. His comfort level quickly settled in and he got very involved (and with much opinion) in his makeover. He asked that I hold a mirror where he could see his face as I applied the makeup, and within minutes, he too, was applying makeup as well. I used a long wooden-stick q-tip to take the product from the jar to my finger for application. When we completed his makeup, he looked in the mirror with much delight. I gave him his own "shiny, new" jar of makeup to take home which he held to his chest like a new found treasure, and before getting down from the chair, he pointed to the q-tip with deep concern and asked, "Aren't you going to give me the magic wand?"

Glitter Makeup

At the same conference I was casually chatting with a Mom and her beautiful 2 1/2 year old daughter who also had a port wine stain on her face. Her Mom informed me that she would not be bringing her daughter to my makeup session, as she didn't want to raise any awareness of the mark for her daughter's sake, and was still wrestling with the thoughts of when and how to communicate about it with her daughter. She was sure her daughter didn't really know there was a difference in her appearance from others. As we sat there, watching her daughter dump

(Continued on page 8)



TEN TECHNIQUES FOR FLAWLESS SKIN

The trim, well-groomed representative greeted her client warmly. "You look flawless," commented the client, as the young woman with short cropped au-burn hair and clear blue eyes moved closer.

The representative smiled to herself at hearing the compliment. During childhood and throughout her teens, her unhappiness stemmed from incessant questions from children and adults alike asking her what's wrong with her face and forcing her to avoid close encounters. The flaming scarlet birthmark extending from her chin to forehead had marred her beauty, and few saw beyond it.

Concealment products transformed her appearance and helped restore her self-esteem. Achieving that flawless-looking, natural finish was the result of skin perfect, protective foundation. But, throughout the years, she shared the real secret to her beauty: mastering the application techniques to accentuate her features and minimize her flaws, including her unsightly birthmark. Following are ten essential techniques to a professional-looking application every time:

EXPERIMENT: Don't expect to get it right the first time. Pre-determine the amount of concealment you will need for perfect coverage through experimentation.

LESS IS MORE: Remember, concealment makeup is highly pigmented. Often the pigment load is 50% greater than traditional foundations. A little will go a long way in covering a large area.

LAYERING WORKS: Pat shade over the entire stain or mark, fading edges into clear skin. Let dry for one to two minutes. Then, add a second layer, if needed.

PATTING PREFERRED: Remember to pat, not rub, when applying. Use the full cushion of your fingers or wedge sponge to pat, then press the foundation over the problem area.

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT: Use short, feather-light strokes with your sponge or fingertips to blend edges beautifully.

WORK DOWNWARD: The best way to avoid a visible line of demarcation is to work downward toward the

neck.

BRUSH STROKES: For areas hard to reach with the sponge or fingertips, apply small quantities of foundation with a concealment brush.

CONTOUR: After the birthmark is completely covered, restore the natural shadows created with the foundation. Often, your own natural contours are eliminated when you apply the foundation so it is essential to replace them with shading cream.

MAKE IT CREASE RESISTANT: Review your work and make sure none of the foundation has creased. If it has, reapply

THE POWER OF POWDER: The final but essential step is to set and seal with a finishing powder. Apply with a puff, using circular motions. Gently pat off excess powder. Be sure to use small, light pats for best results. It ensures an even, flawless application every time for a long lasting finish and problem free skin.

###

Covermark is a leader in concealment products and a Diamond Sponsor of Birthmarks.com.

Glitter Makeup (Continued from page 7)

out the contents of her Mom's purse on the floor and proceed to apply lipstick to her lips (almost) her Mom told me how she just loved makeup. So much so, the Mom bought her children's play "glitter makeup". As the Mom was telling me this story, you could see her whole demeanor change, and with a lump in her throat she looked at me and said, "You know it just occurred to me that the only place my daughter puts the glitter makeup is on her mark". It was in that instant that the Mom discovered that even at 2 ½ years of age, her little girl was aware of her special look.

The "Celebrate Me!" book is available for FREE by emailing the NeoStrata Company at book@neostrata.com.

###

The NeoStrata Company is a Gold Sponsor of Birthmarks.com.

Letters to the Editor

Editor's note: these are a sampling of e-mails that have been sent to the editor and webmaster in the past month. Unless appropriate, last names and e-mail addresses are removed for privacy.

Dear Michael,

I have found your newsletter and emails very interesting. I am among the lucky I guess in that mine is only on the left shoulder, arm and hand. I am now 56 and it hasn't changed much over time. Same continents (shapes), pretty much same color. The usual comments from others (some well meaning and others not so). I can attest, of course, the pain of childhood comments but being where it is, long sleeve shirts pretty much made it go away. I could pass as undamaged goods so to speak.

I have noticed a lack of comment on a quality I have noticed with my PWS. Mine changes color before I have physical symptoms of illness. I always know when I am going to come down with something like a cold of the flu by the cast it assumes. Normally a "healthy" pink or red it will pick up what I can only describe as a sickly color. Dark/jaundiced. Hard to describe.

I've lived with it so long that it no longer bothers me and being unobtrusive I rarely have to deal with comments from others unless I wear short sleeves. Then when people make the inevitable "oh my goodness, how did you burn yourself" comment I let them walk into the trap of knowing that I know they find it ugly. Then I watch them squirm as they have to extricate themselves from their social gaffe. I am so thankful that I do not have the problems of

the facially marked. Having PWS gives me empathy but even I have to work at getting past the mark as it can be visually disorienting. It can be so difficult to see past the birthmark to the person underneath. Anyway thank you for giving me a place to see others with my condition. I remain an appreciat(iv)e reader of your posts

-John

###

Editor: many people have commented on their birthmarks changing color with temperature but rarely as a precursor to a change in health.

Michael,

Just revisiting your site after first finding it a year ago. Wanted to thank you for your courageous & diligent efforts here which inspired me to explore the new laser options out there. I am 40 & have lived with a simple portwine that had begun to thicken & darken over the last 10 years (it covers the same area as yours). I say HAD because since finding your site last year I've had just 3 treatments on the VBEAM & the results are astounding. That thing really works & my b-mark is 40% gone. Skin is smoother, blebs are gone & volume is reduced a lot. I have a realistic hope that in 8-10 treatments it will be largely unnoticeable. I've also noticed that my face just feels cooler--I hadn't noticed how hot feeling it had become. I'd always wondered how I'd feel having no birthmark & figured it wouldn't change much but I am surprised that already I feel different, more relaxed in public mainly. At any rate thanks for what you are doing.

I was looking at your pics just now & as I scrolled down I was surprised at the small amount of change I saw until your last 2 or 3 treatments. After reading your

chronicle I understand you went through a lot of different trial runs before the VBeam. Obviously it is a superior system & I'm glad you found that. The black dots are fun but the results are so profound & in my case quick. I usually see serious lightening when I wake up one the 4th or 5th day.

The docs you had on your site for the Seattle area only work on children. For adults Dr. Berg at UW Med Center seems to be the only game in town & he's great with a great staff. The appointment contact is Nori Miller at (206) 598- 6647. She's the gate keeper. good luck,

-Jeff

###

Editor: Dr. Berg's contact record can be found at <http://www.birthmarks.com/doctorinfo.cfm?ID=463>.

Wow! What a treasure!! Thank you so much. I LOVE seeing your picture! Even at 40 years old (in 3 days!) it always makes me feel less separate from the rest of the world to see other adults with birthmarks. Who knew there were so many of us? While growing up there was one boy in the grade behind me who also had a PWS on his face and on the Staten Island Ferry there was a worker with a very large and very dark PWS on his face and he was mean and snarly to everyone. I often witnessed other children (and unfortunately some adults) making fun of him. But he always had a quiet, kind word for me and sometimes a lollipop.

I knew even then that we were all cream puffs underneath our port wine stains...

Thanks Michael!

Birthmarks.com

5104 Beverly Hills Drive
First Floor
Austin, TX 78731

Phone: 512-302-1574

Fax: 954-697-8293

Editor@Birthmarks.com

Birthmarks.com is the premiere Internet resource site for information about birthmarks and port wine stains, known also as vascular lesions and vascular malformations.

Tell A Friend

Birthmarks.com wants to get the word out to people who could benefit from these resources. Please be sure to forward this newsletter along to family, friends and your healthcare providers who may find it of interest. You can easily sign up on our website at www.Birthmarks.com/newsletter.cfm to receive a copy of the monthly newsletter. You are welcome to make copies of this newsletter as long as the copyright is not altered or removed in any manner.

Birthmarks.com also offers a large active worldwide Internet support group to its community. The service is entirely free. You can find out more information at www.Birthmarks.com/newsgroup.cfm.

What Do You Think?

Please be sure to send your comments on this issue and suggestions for future issues to Editor@Birthmarks.com.

Sponsorship

Sponsorship opportunities are available for both healthcare providers and companies. Please visit our website at www.Birthmarks.com/sponsors.cfm, or e-mail Sponsorship@Birthmarks.com.

Events of Interest

A comprehensive listing can be found at: www.Birthmarks.com/events.cfm.

- (Jan 21, 2003) Fourth National Day of Awareness For Sturge-Weber Syndrome May 14, 2003
- (Dec 19, 2002) The 2003 SWF Annual International Conference will take place July 11-13, 2003
- (Nov 23, 2002) Birthmarks.com launches new monthly newsletter...
- (Oct 20, 2002) VBF Addresses American Academy of Pediatrics at Conference in Boston
- (Oct 6, 2002) PWS Becoming Trendy? Paris Fashion Magazines Think So!
- (Sep 23, 2002) PWS Conference in NYC October 2003 Announced
- (Sep 9, 2002) Webmaster's Latest Insurance Appeal...
- (Sep 1, 2002) NeoStrata and Birthmarks.com announce new Referral Program
- (Jul 20, 2002) Free Airfare for Medical Treatment

Disclaimer

Information accessed through Birthmarks.com resources is presented in summary form in order to impart general information relating to the diagnosis and treatment of port wine stains, tattoo removal, and other skin disorders. Such information is not complete and should not be used as a substitute for a consultation or visit with your physician or other health care provider. Information accessed through the site is not exhaustive and does not cover every aspect of port wine stains, tattoo removal, and other skin disorders. Birthmarks.com makes no warranty as to the information's completeness, reliability or accuracy. Should you have any health care related questions regarding this matter, please see your physician or other health care provider promptly.

Please see www.Birthmarks.com/legal.cfm for the full disclaimer, privacy issues, and copyright notices.