



## Understanding umbilical granuloma

### What is an umbilical granuloma?

An umbilical granuloma is an overgrowth of tissue during the healing process of the belly button (umbilicus). It usually looks like a soft pink or red lump and often is wet or leaks small amounts of clear or yellow fluid. It is most common in the first few weeks of a baby's life.

The exact cause of this overgrowth is unknown but, if left untreated, the granuloma can take months to resolve and can cause parental anxiety.

### General care of the umbilicus / belly button:

- Keep the belly button clean and dry.
- Cleanse belly button with soap and warm water when it gets soiled with urine or stool.
- Expose the belly button to the air by rolling back the top of the nappy.

### How is an umbilical granuloma treated?

Always seek advice first from your health visitor.

- If there is an umbilical granuloma and no obvious infection, then your health visitor may suggest a twice daily application of a pinch of table salt treatment. This has been found to be an effective and safe treatment which you can do at home.

- Your health visitor will teach you how to apply a small pinch of salt, after you have cleaned the belly button with cotton wool soaked in warm water, then to cover the area with a clean piece of gauze and leave for up to 30 minutes. Following this, the salt should be rinsed off with a clean gauze dressing soaked in cooled boiled water.
- Your health visitor will advise you to continue this treatment for at least two days, by which time the granuloma should have reduced and started to heal.
- Your health visitor should reassess your baby's belly button in one week.

### What to do if the salt treatment is not effective or an infection is suspected?

- If your baby's belly button is showing signs of an infection, such as redness of the surrounding skin or possibly having an offensive smell and discharge, or if your baby has a fever, contact your GP for further details on treatment.

For additional Parent Tips see [www.ihv.org.uk](http://www.ihv.org.uk)

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