

Mom's post about baby's port-wine stain draws swift support



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A news anchor in Des Moines, Iowa, is getting attention after posting on Facebook about her daughter's port-wine stain. Elizabeth Klinge shared photos of her daughter Hanalay, who has a prominent port-wine stain on half of her face, on Wednesday.

"Another successful laser treatment for Hanalay yesterday in Iowa City!" Elizabeth captioned the photos. "This was treatment number four on her port-wine stain, and each time it seems to get a little easier (for both of us). After a good nap on the drive back home, she's back to her lively little self!"

Elizabeth's post was flooded with well wishes, earning more than 1,000 reactions in the first hour and more than 100 comments.



“Glad there are treatments, but it breaks my heart thinking this little one has to go through all this,” one person wrote. Another commented: “So sorry you two have to go through this, but both of you are troopers! Your daughter is so cute and I know things will get better for all of you!”

A port-wine stain is a permanent birthmark that starts out as pinkish or reddish and can turn darker as a child gets older, according to the Mayo Clinic. Port-wine stains usually appear on a person’s face but can show up on other areas of the body as well, including the neck, head, and upper body.

Port-wine stains are caused by an abnormal formation of tiny blood vessels in the skin, per the U.S. National Library of Medicine. In rare cases, they’re a sign of Sturge-Weber syndrome, a neurological disorder, or Klippel-Trenaunay-Weber syndrome, a condition that can cause venous malformations in a person’s rectum and bladder. In severe cases, port-wine stains can be “significantly disfiguring,” Joshua Zeichner, MD, a New York City-based dermatologist, tells Yahoo Beauty.

The birthmark usually persists throughout a person’s life unless it’s treated, **Gary Goldenberg, MD**, assistant clinical professor of dermatology at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York City, tells Yahoo Beauty.

The treatment for port-wine stains is usually cosmetic and involves lasers to help fade the discoloration. “I often advise my patients to treat these as young adults, when laser isn’t a traumatic procedure,” Goldenberg says. But port-wine stains don’t have to be treated unless they’re painful, bleeding, or associated with an internal abnormality, he points out.

Nor is the treatment without risks. “Most commonly, it’s a harmless process, but in rare instances it can cause problems with bleeding and lead to infection,” Goldenberg says. Port-wine stains can be “significantly improved” with repeated laser treatments, Zeichner says. However, they’re more likely to fade than go away completely, Goldenberg notes.

Mom Elizabeth shared in the comments on her Facebook page that Hanalay will have at least four more treatments in the next year, followed by one or two a year after that. She also said in a newscast that her daughter will look “pretty bruised up” for a few weeks, adding, “that just means the treatment worked.”