

Elliot Hospital: Ask the Pediatric Surgeon



Dr. Soukup, My 2 month old always has crusty drainage around her bellybutton but the cord fell off over a month ago. Shouldn't it be healed by now? – Kelly S.



Dear Kelly,

Yes, the umbilical cord usually falls off in the first few weeks of life and the belly button should be healed soon after. A small amount of crusty drainage around the belly button is most likely something called an "umbilical granuloma." This is a pink, round piece of tissue that you might see at the deepest part of the umbilicus, or belly button. It is not dangerous, but will usually require treatment to go away. Your pediatrician may choose to treat this a few times with a topical treatment, but if it doesn't go away, a simple procedure in the office can usually take care of the problem. It is painless and takes just a few seconds to complete. The granuloma is

usually based on a narrow stalk, and because there is no sensation to this tissue, it is simple to snip it off, and then treat the base. No anesthesia is necessary and it takes care of the problem right away. One thing that I always keep in mind when I see kids with belly button problems, is that the belly button was a very important part of the body during pregnancy. The umbilical cord carried the blood to and from the baby; the intestines and the bladder also used to be located outside the body through the umbilical opening. Appointments are available in my office to check for anything more serious. Thanks for your question!

-Dr. Soukup



Elizabeth S. Soukup, M.D., M.M.Sc.
Pediatric Surgeon

Dr. Soukup is a Pediatric Surgeon at the Elliot Hospital and has an interest in educating families about pediatric health and wellness. Her mission is to provide expert specialty care for children of all ages in New Hampshire - newborns through teenagers - striving to keep them close to their families and communities. If you would like more information, call 603-663-8393 for an appointment, or visit our website at <http://elliothospital.org/website/pediatric-surgery.php>

Dr. Soukup earned her Bachelor of Science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and her Doctor of Medicine from the University of Chicago Pritzker School of Medicine, where she received the Outstanding Achievement Award in Medicine, graduating first in her class. She completed her General Surgery training at the Massachusetts General Hospital and her fellowship in Pediatric Surgery at Children's Hospital Boston. During her time in Boston, she also completed a Masters of Medical Sciences degree in clinical

investigation from Harvard Medical School. She is board-certified in both Pediatric Surgery and General Surgery.

She has specialized training and experience in minimally invasive surgical treatment for babies, children and teenagers. Her practice includes all areas of general pediatric surgery, including common pediatric surgical problems as well as neonatal surgery, congenital anomalies, minimally invasive surgery, and complex thoracic surgical problems.