

Vascular Anomalies Center
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HOW TO TAKE PHOTOGRAPHS OF VASCULAR ANOMALIES

In order to best evaluate your child, yourself, or your patient, photographs of any visible lesions as well as a face photograph are necessary. If there are no visible lesions, a face photograph is still requested because we occasionally see patients with particular diagnoses who have specific facial features. The photographs are best taken on a digital camera and emailed to our Center (vascular@childrens.harvard.edu).

The following information will assist you in taking the best possible photographs.

1. The photographs should be taken in a room with good lighting.
2. The photographs should be taken in front of a dark colored background, such as blue or green. Please don't take the photographs in an area where there are a lot of objects in the background. You can use an unadorned wall as the background or hang a non-patterned sheet or blanket.
3. All photographs should be taken with the camera held vertically.
4. Please use a macro-mode setting to help with clarity and color. The setting may appear on your camera as a flower icon.
5. Clothes and jewelry should be removed so that the visible lesions are clearly seen.
6. If you are photographing a face/head/neck lesion, include from the top of the head to the base of the neck.
7. If you are photographing a torso lesion, include from the base of the neck to the waist – front, back, or both.
8. If you are photographing a lesion below the waist, include from the waist to the toes – front, back, or both.
9. If you are photographing the arms, include from the neck to the fingers.
10. If the lesions are on the arms and/or legs, please include photographs of both the affected and unaffected limbs so that we can compare them.
11. If you are taking photographs of the legs, please shoot level with the legs, not looking down.
12. Take photographs from a distance to include both limbs, then focus in closer on the individual lesions themselves.
13. If there are no visible skin lesions, but a limb or area of the body that is larger, take comparison photographs as well as photographs of the affected area alone.
14. Take photographs from the front, back, and sides, if appropriate, to better show the lesions. Leg lesions should be photographed from the side with the legs held apart with one leg in front of the other.

15. If you know that the lesion fills up and becomes larger in certain dependent positions (for example, when the head is down or the arm/leg is down) please take photographs with the area both upright and down so that we can appreciate the difference.
16. If there are lesions inside the mouth, please take photographs with the mouth open in good lighting. You may need to have someone hold a flashlight aimed into the mouth in order to get a good photograph. Take a close-up photo of the inside of the mouth.
17. When photographing the face, please take both a smiling and non-smiling photograph.
18. If you, your child, or your patient has unusual appearing hands or feet, include photographs of the hands and feet even if there are no visible lesions on them. Please have the fingers spread apart and the toes in a relaxed position in the photographs.
19. If there are genital lesions, please be reassured that we are very sensitive to issues of privacy, but that it is important to see photographs to understand the lesions and make an appropriate diagnosis.
20. Once the photographs are taken and loaded into your computer, please look at the photographs on a full screen to be sure they aren't blurry when enlarged. If they are, you should retake the photographs on a different camera setting.
21. If photographs are developed and mailed, they must be in color. Black and white photographs do not adequately represent the visible lesions.
22. When emailing photographs, please attach only 2-3 photographs to each email in order to be sure that they will reach our account. Our server does not allow large attachments.