

Skin Cancer Types, Prevention and Detection

Lesson Title: Skin Cancer 2: Types, Prevention, and Detection
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Skin Cancer: Types

What are the main warning signs of skin cancer?

They include a change to the skin, like a mole, sore, lump, or growth that can become sore over time and/or bleed.

Name the three types of skin cancer.

They are basal cell carcinoma, squamous cell carcinoma, and melanoma.

Basal cell carcinoma

What are the characteristics of basal cell carcinoma?

The most common type of basal cell carcinoma is painless, slow growing, does

not spread, and usually found on an exposed part of the body.

Click on and review the six samples of basal cells. How might you know you have basal cell carcinoma?

You have a spot on your skin that does not go away and may bleed easily. It can look waxy and may be flat or have a slightly raised surface. It is usually pink or red in color.

Squamous cell carcinoma

In which layer of skin do squamous cell carcinomas originate?

They originate in the middle layer of the epidermis.

Among which populations is this form of cancer most common?

It is most common among African Americans and people of Indian heritage.

Describe where squamous cells might be found on the body.

They are mostly found on exposed parts, especially the lower lip and rim of the ear. They can be found anywhere on the body, even on mucous membranes. Also, they can be found on legs or near genitals in African Americans. Finally, they can be found on skin that has been exposed to strong sun, X rays or chemicals, or has been injured or scarred.

Why should people be more aware of squamous cell carcinoma?

They grow quickly and can spread to other parts of the body. Strong sun exposure can cause this type of cancer.

Why should you be concerned about squamous cell carcinoma?

This kind of skin cancer is becoming more common among the younger population. When detected early, however, people have an excellent prognosis. When detected later (when the cancer has begun to spread), survival rates decrease significantly. Awareness of the warning signs increases the chances for early detection, which is key for all cancers.

What should individuals look for when checking for squamous cell carcinoma on their skin?

They should look for changes in an existing mole, wart, or other skin lesion; a sore that doesn't heal; or a rough, scaly, reddish patch that grows larger.

Click on and review the five samples of squamous cell carcinoma. What characteristics might alert you to this kind of skin cancer?

Squamous cell carcinoma has edges that are irritated and do not heal properly. The spot may ooze, or be a raised red surface with irregular borders. The area might look like a yellow crater. Or it might look like a lump with a scab in the center.

Melanoma and the Danger Signs

Why is melanoma the most dangerous form of skin cancer?

It is often an aggressive form of cancer compared with basal cell carcinoma and squamous cell carcinoma. It can spread rapidly to the body's organs making it more difficult to treat; this results in a poorer prognosis for the patient. This cancer is often misdiagnosed or not diagnosed at all.

In which layer does melanoma originate?

It originates in the basal cell layer, in the melanocyte cells.

Who is more susceptible to melanoma?

People with a family history of skin cancer; people with light hair, skin, and eyes; and people who have had three or more blistering sunburns before age 20 are all more susceptible to melanoma.

What are the four types of melanoma?

They are superficial spreading melanoma, nodular melanoma, lentigo maligna melanoma, and acral lentiginous melanoma.

What are the ABCD symptoms?

The ABCD symptoms are asymmetrical shape, irregular borders, multiple colors, and a growth bigger than 6 mm in diameter.

Click on and review the five samples of melanoma. What strikes you most about these samples?

They have a wide range of symptoms. Melanoma can be asymmetrical or not, flat or raised, light or dark colored.

Name some warning signs of melanoma.

Some warning signs include a mole that appears suddenly or one that changes in appearance; a mole or lesion that bleeds, itches, oozes, or does not heal.

Skin Cancer: Prevention and Detection

What are the best ways to protect yourself from skin cancer?

The best ways to protect yourself include wearing protective clothing, like long sleeves and pants; wearing sunglasses, sunscreen, and a hat; and doing monthly skin self exams.