



## Short Communication

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### Short Note on Melanoma

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#### Abstract

Melanoma is a type of skin cancer that results when the cancerous cells start to grow in the melanocytes, or cells which produce melanin. These are the cells which are responsible for giving the skin its colour. Melanoma can occur anywhere on the body, even in the eyes. Although the condition is rare, now a day's doctors are diagnosing a larger number of people with melanoma than ever before.

**Keywords:** Melanoma, Skin

#### Introduction

If a person has been diagnosed with melanoma, tests will conduct to determine how much the melanoma has spread and how large the tumor. A doctor will then use this information to which stage or the cancer type. There are mainly five stages of melanoma, from stage 0 to stage 4. The higher the number, the more advanced the cancer tends to be.

By using the staging process, doctors and patients are better able to understand their treatment options and condition. Staging provides a quick reference point to help doctors communicate with one another regarding a person's treatment plan and overall outlook.

#### Diagnosis

- Physical examination: Melanoma can grow anywhere on the skin. This is why doctors often recommend thorough skin checks, including on the scalp and in between the toes. A doctor may also ask about any recent changes in the skin or in existing moles on the body.
- CT scan: Also called a CAT scan, a CT scan can create images of the body to identify the potential signs of tumor and tumor spread on the body.
- Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scan: This scan uses magnetic energy and radio waves to generate the images. A doctor can administer a radioactive material called as gadolinium that highlights cancer cells.
- Positron emission tomography (PET) scan: This is another imaging study type that tests for where the body is using glucose for energy. Because tumors consume glucose more significantly, they will often show like bright spots on the imaging.

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- Blood testing: People with melanoma may have higher levels of the enzyme lactate dehydrogenase (LDH).
- Biopsy: A doctor may take a sample of a potentially cancerous lesion as well as nearby lymph nodes for the biopsy.

#### Prevention

As mentioned earlier, melanoma is a rare form of the skin cancer. Sometimes a person may not have a significant history of sun exposure but still get melanoma. This could be due to a family history of the condition. However, there are some steps you can take to reduce your risk for melanoma:

Avoid excess sun exposure and stay in the shade whenever possible to avoid the sun's rays.

According to the American Cancer Society, those who use tanning beds are at increased or higher risk for melanoma.

Conduct regular skin checks to look for signs of changes on moles. Some people may take pictures of their skin and compare them on a monthly basis to determine if any changes have taken place in the moles or not.

Any time a person observes a change in mole or an area of skin that appears crusted, cracked, or otherwise ulcerated in appearance should seek a dermatologist to evaluate for a possibly cancerous lesion.

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