



Basal Cell Carcinoma

Basal cell carcinoma occurs most frequently on sun-exposed regions of the body. Although this major type of skin cancer rarely spreads to other organs of the body, it can cause destruction of surrounding tissue. That's why early detection and treatment are critical for the most effective treatment.

Chronic sun exposure, especially in people with fair skin, light hair, and blue, green, or gray eyes, is the most common cause of basal cell carcinomas. However, there are other contributing factors such as burns, exposure to radiation, and arsenical intoxication.

In appearance, basal cell carcinoma may vary. Some warning signs of basal cell carcinoma include an open sore, a reddish patch, a growth with an elevated border and a central indentation, a bump or nodule, and a scar-like area.

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Can I Avoid This Condition?

Overexposure to sunlight is the chief cause of basal cell carcinoma. That's why sun avoidance, especially during peak sunlight hours (10 a.m.-3 p.m.) is your best way to limit the risk of developing this form of skin cancer. You can check skin exposure to the sun's harmful ultraviolet rays further by wearing sunglasses, broad-brimmed hats, and protective, tightly woven clothing.

Furthermore, a broad-spectrum sunscreen should be applied liberally to all sun exposed skin (including the lips) on a daily basis, even cloudy days, and reapplied every 90 minutes during outdoor activities. Sunscreens should block both UVA and UVB rays and be rated SPF 15 or higher. Also, avoid tanning parlors and home tanning lights of any kind (self-tanning creams and sprays are OK).

Further, you should inspect your entire body for any skin changes, especially those already mentioned. And as a matter of course, you should visit your dermatologist for a skin examination.

So What Treatment Can I Expect?

To confirm a diagnosis of basal cell carcinoma, your dermatologist will want to perform a biopsy. A biopsy involves removing a portion of tissue, which is then examined by a dermatopathologist under a microscope. If cancer is confirmed, treatment is required. Generally, there are several ways to treat basal cell carcinoma. Your physician's choice of therapy

will vary, depending on the tumor's size, location, depth of penetration, and type of basal cell carcinoma encountered. The physician will also take into account the patient's age and general health. Some of the treatment options currently available to you are: topical therapy, excisional surgery, electro-surgery, radiation therapy, and Mohs' surgery (microscopically controlled surgery). Your dermatologist will discuss which of these treatment options is best suited to your situation.

Don't Become a Statistic

Basal cell carcinoma is the most common form of skin cancer, affecting over one million people in the United States each year. Basal cell carcinomas generally tend to occur in older individuals, although they may occur in young adults and even children. People with one basal cell carcinoma have a greater chance of developing others, thus emphasizing the importance of regular follow-up visits to a dermatologist.

Want To Learn More?

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While we do not treat patients directly, we provide invaluable assistance to your doctor by providing the most accurate possible diagnosis. All to provide you with the best possible outlook for recovery.



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