



basal cell carcinoma

Brochures and additional information

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Other references

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Associated Pathology Medical Group, Inc. (APMG)

www.apmglab.com

APMG is the longest standing independent pathology practice in Silicon Valley. Our group consists of eight pathologists at two practice sites: Los Gatos and Santa Cruz, serving physicians throughout California. Our pathologists are outpatient and inpatient specialists that produce accurate, diagnostic reports within 24 hours in most instances. Abnormal cases are routinely peer-reviewed.

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basal cell carcinoma

What is the single most powerful weapon in the fight against skin cancer?

Information.



basal cell carcinoma



How can we protect ourselves?

BASAL CELL CARCINOMA is the most common form of skin cancer. It occurs most frequently on sun-exposed regions of the body. Although this skin cancer rarely spreads to other organs of the body (i.e., metastasizes), it can cause destruction of surrounding tissue. Thus early detection and treatment are needed.

Most basal cell carcinomas are caused by chronic sun exposure, especially in people with fair skin, light hair and blue, green or grey eyes. In a few instances, there are other contributing factors such as burns, exposure to radiation, arsenical intoxication and stasis dermatitis of the legs.

Basal cell carcinoma may have several different appearances on your skin. Some warning signs that may indicate basal cell carcinoma are 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.

Because chronic overexposure to sunlight is the leading cause of basal cell carcinoma, sun avoidance, especially during peak sunlight hours (i.e., 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.) is an effective preventative measure to help reduce the risk of developing this skin cancer. Limit skin exposure to the sun's harmful ultraviolet (invisible) rays by wearing sunglasses, broad-brimmed hats and protective, tightly woven clothing.

Furthermore, use a broad-spectrum sunscreen, rated SPF-15 or higher, on all exposed skin, including the lips, even on cloudy days. Reapply sunscreen frequently. Additionally, avoid tanning parlors and artificial tanning devices.

Inspect your entire body regularly for any skin changes, especially those already mentioned, and routinely visit your dermatologist for a skin examination.

What are the treatment options?

After being examined by your dermatologist, a diagnosis of basal cell carcinoma is confirmed with a biopsy. This procedure consists of removing a portion of tissue, which is then examined by a dermatopathologist under a microscope. If cancer is confirmed, treatment is required. Several effective methods are available to treat this tumor. Your physician's choice of therapy depends on the size, location and subtype of basal cell carcinoma encountered. The patient's age and general health are also taken into consideration. The more common treatment options include excisional surgery, electrosurgery, radiation therapy and Mohs surgery (microscopically controlled surgery). Your dermatologist will discuss these treatment options with you.

Don't become a statistic.

Not only is basal cell carcinoma the most common form of skin cancer, it is the most common of all cancers, affecting nearly 800,000 Americans each year. Men are affected more often than women. 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.