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PERSPECTIVE

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Overview of Squamous Cells

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Description

The middle and outer layers of the skin are made up of squamous cells, which are where squamous cell carcinoma of the skin typically originates. Squamous cell carcinoma of the skin can be aggressive, but it frequently does not constitute a life-threatening hazard. Skin squamous cell carcinoma that is left untreated can get large or spread to other areas of body, leading to life-threatening consequences. The majority of skin cancers called squamous cell carcinomas are brought on by extended exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation from sunshine, tanning beds, or lamps. Avoiding UV light lowers risk of developing skin cancer, including squamous cell carcinoma. Squamous cell carcinoma can develop anywhere there are squamous cells because they are present in many different parts of the body. Skin cancer that develops in squamous cells is referred to as squamous cell carcinoma.

Symptoms

Skin cancer known as squamous cell carcinoma most frequently develops on sun-exposed areas such the scalp, palms, ears, and lips. However, it can happen anywhere on his/her body, including genitalia, the inside of mouth, and the soles of feet.

Causes

The middle and outer layers of his/her skin's flat, thin squamous cells can have alterations (mutations) in their DNA, which leads to squamous cell carcinoma. The squamous cells are instructed by the mutations to grow out of control and live while normal cells would have died.

The majority of DNA mutations in skin cells are brought on by ultraviolet (UV) radiation, which can be found in sunlight, tanning beds, and commercial tanning lamps.

Risk factors

His/Her chance of developing squamous cell carcinoma of the skin may be increased by: • Fair skin. Skin squamous cell carcinoma can affect anyone, regardless of skin tone. Less melanin (the skin's pigment) offers less protection against harmful UV rays, though.

A person with lighter skin is far more likely to get skin cancer, particularly squamous cell carcinoma, than is someone with blond or red hair, light-coloured eyes, freckles, or sunburns easily.

Prolonged sun exposure: His/Her chance of developing squamous cell carcinoma of the skin increases when they are exposed to UV rays from the sun. Spending a lot of time in the sun raises risk of developing squamous cell carcinoma of the skin, especially if he/she doesn't protect skin with clothing or sunblock.

Utilizing tanning beds: Squamous cell carcinoma of the skin is more common among users of indoor tanning beds.

Previous sunburns: The likelihood of getting squamous cell carcinoma of the skin as an adult increases if he/she have one or more blistering sunburns as a kid or teenager. Adult sunburns are another risk factor.

• A history of precancerous skin lesions in the individual. Your chance of developing squamous cell carcinoma of the skin is increased if you have a precancerous skin lesion such actinic keratosis or Bowen's disease.

• A history of skin cancer in the personal. Squamous cell carcinoma of the skin is quite likely to return if it has already occurred in the past.

Immune system weakened: The risk of developing skin cancer is higher in people with compromised immune systems. This includes those who take immune-suppressing drugs, such as those who have had organ transplants, as well as those who have leukaemia or lymphoma or who take chemotherapy.

A rare genetic condition: Skin cancer risk is significantly enhanced in people who have xeroderma pigmentosum, a condition that makes them extremely sen-

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sitive to sunlight.

Complications

Squamous cell carcinoma of the skin, if left untreated, has the potential to migrate to the lymph nodes or other organs, harm neighbouring healthy tissue, and even prove fatal.

Skin cancers that are:

• Very large or deep

• involve the mucous membranes, such as the lips, may be more likely to develop aggressive squamous cell carcinoma.

• Affects those with compromised immune systems, such as those with chronic leukaemia or those who use anti-rejection drugs after receiving an organ transplant.

Prevention

Skin squamous cell carcinomas can be averted in the majority of cases. To keep yourself safe:

• Steer clear of the sun in the midday hours. The sun's rays are at their peak intensity for many North Americans between 10 and noon and 3p.m. Even in the winter or when the sky is hazy, schedule outside activities for other times of the day.

• All year round, wear sunscreen. Even on cloudy days, wear a broad-spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30. Reapply sunscreen every two hours, or more frequently if you're swimming or perspiring. Apply sunscreen liberally.

• Don protective attire. Wear dark, tightly woven clothing that covers your arms and legs, along with a broad-brimmed hat that offers more protection than a baseball cap or visor, to protect your skin.

Additionally, several businesses sell protective apparel. An acceptable brand can be suggested by a dermatologist. Bear in mind your sunglasses. Be on the lookout for those that can block UVA and UVB rays.

• Steer clear of sunbeds. The chance of developing skin cancer is raised by the UV radiation that tanning beds release.