

Malignant skin lesions

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OnlineMoleCheck.com

The Two Extremes

Melanoma

The most dangerous skin cancer



Basal Cell Carcinoma

The most frequent skin cancer

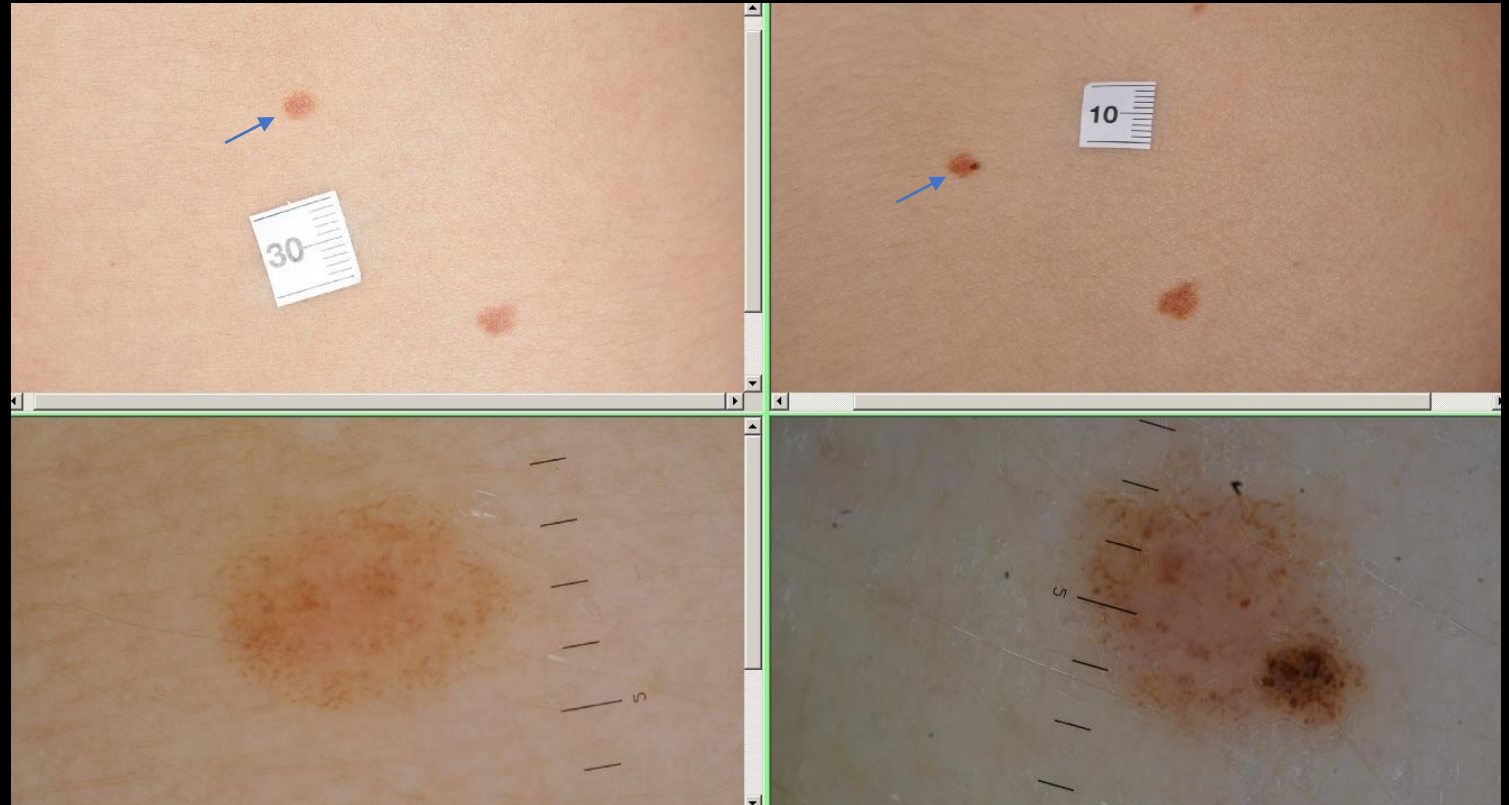


Malignant melanoma

Melanoma is a serious type of skin cancer that starts in the pigment-producing skin cells called melanocytes. When caught early, it is often treatable, so it's vital to know what to look for during skin checks:

- Asymmetry: If you draw a line through a melanoma, the two halves will not match in size and shape.
- Border: The edges of a melanoma are often uneven, notched, or blurred.
- Color: A melanoma may have different shades of brown, black, or even patches of pink, red, white, or blue.
- Diameter: A melanoma can be larger than 6mm across, but it can be smaller when first detected, so this is a soft rule.
- Evolving: Any change in the size, shape, color, or elevation of a spot on your skin could be a warning sign. These changes might occur very slowly, making them hard to notice. Bleeding, itchiness, or crusting is generally a late-stage warning sign.

If you notice any of these signs, see a doctor. Remember, the best and only defense against melanoma is to check your skin regularly and to have any new or changing moles evaluated by a professional.



This is a melanoma presenting as a changing mole (smaller than 6mm), with most of the ABCDE criteria being positive.

Malignant melanoma

D – Diameter: 2mm

Here are two 2mm melanomas presenting as evolving moles, meeting most of the ABCDE criteria (except D). The follow-up images were taken about one year apart.



Patient A



Patient B

Multiple faces of melanoma

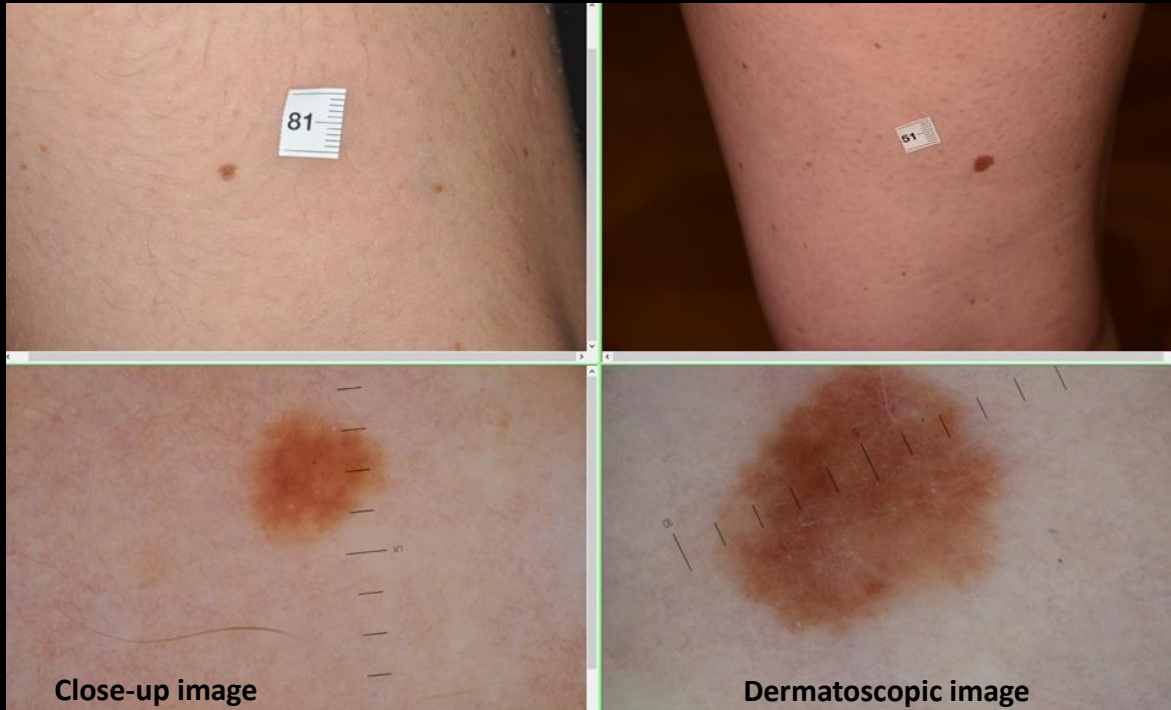
A: Invasive melanoma

B: Invasive melanoma

C: in situ melanoma ('changing mole')

in situ = the earliest stage

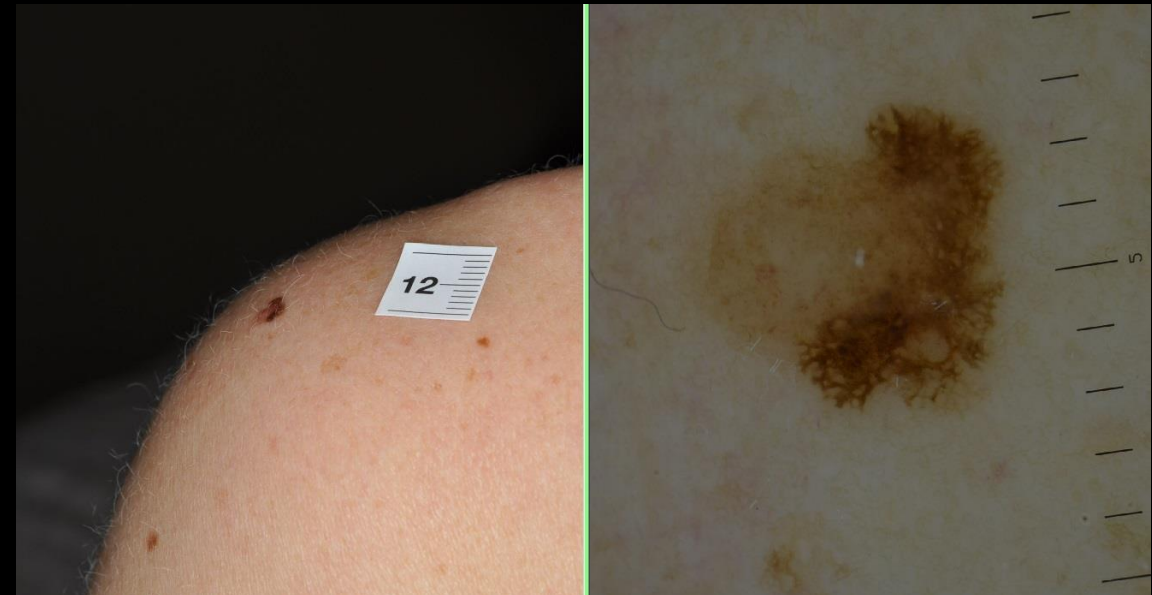
C



A



B



Multiple faces of melanoma

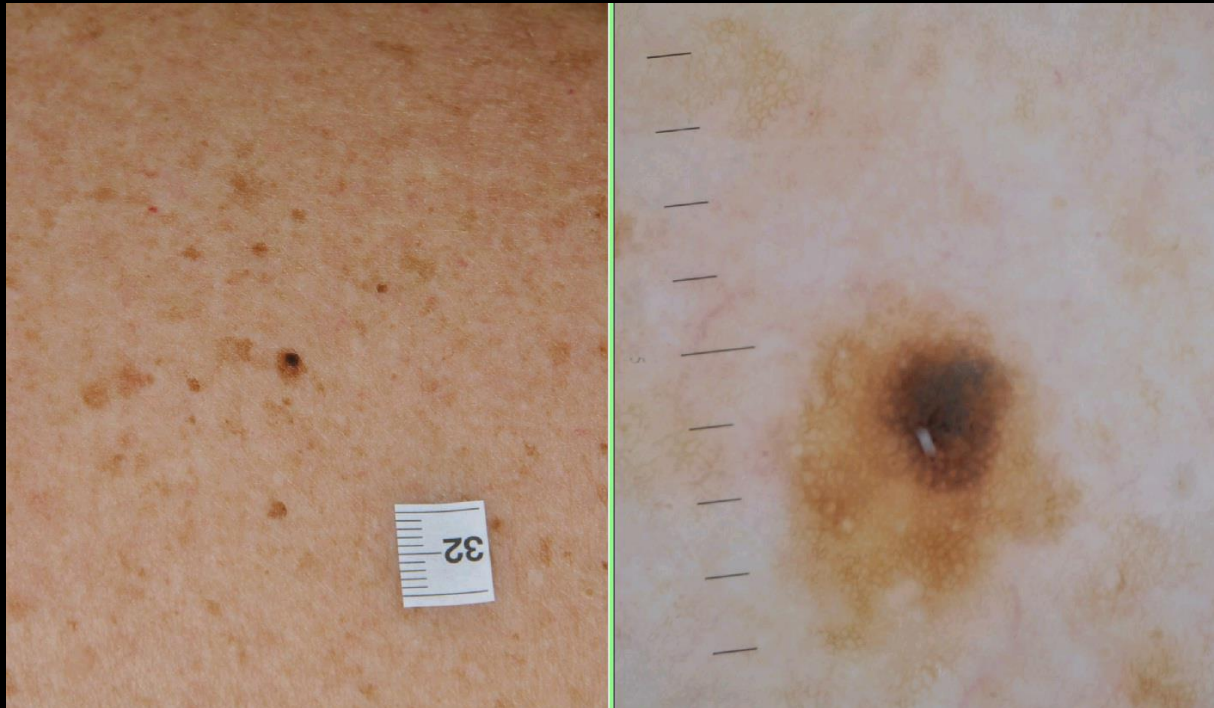
A: Invasive melanoma

B: in situ melanoma

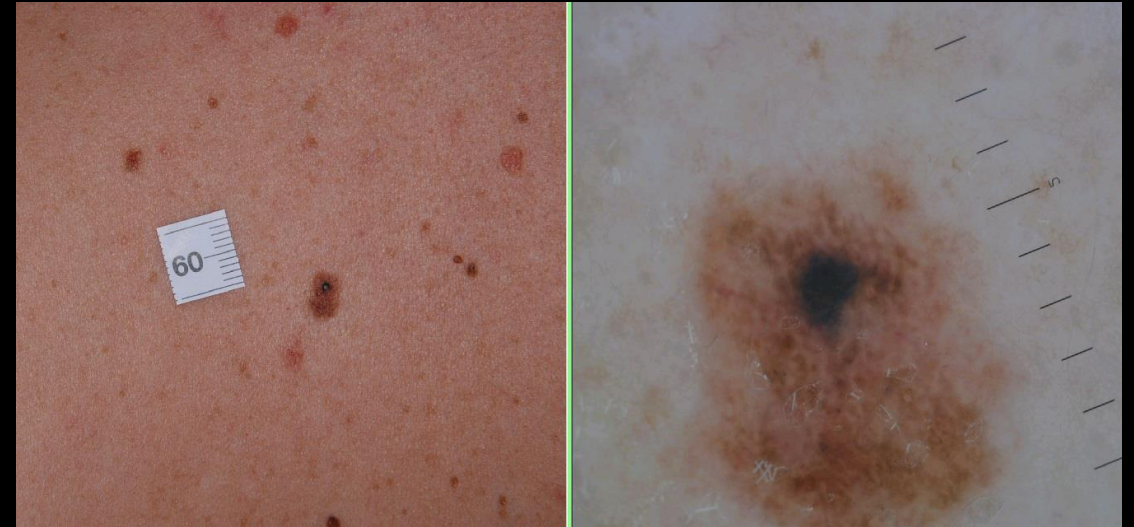
C: in situ melanoma

in situ = the earliest stage

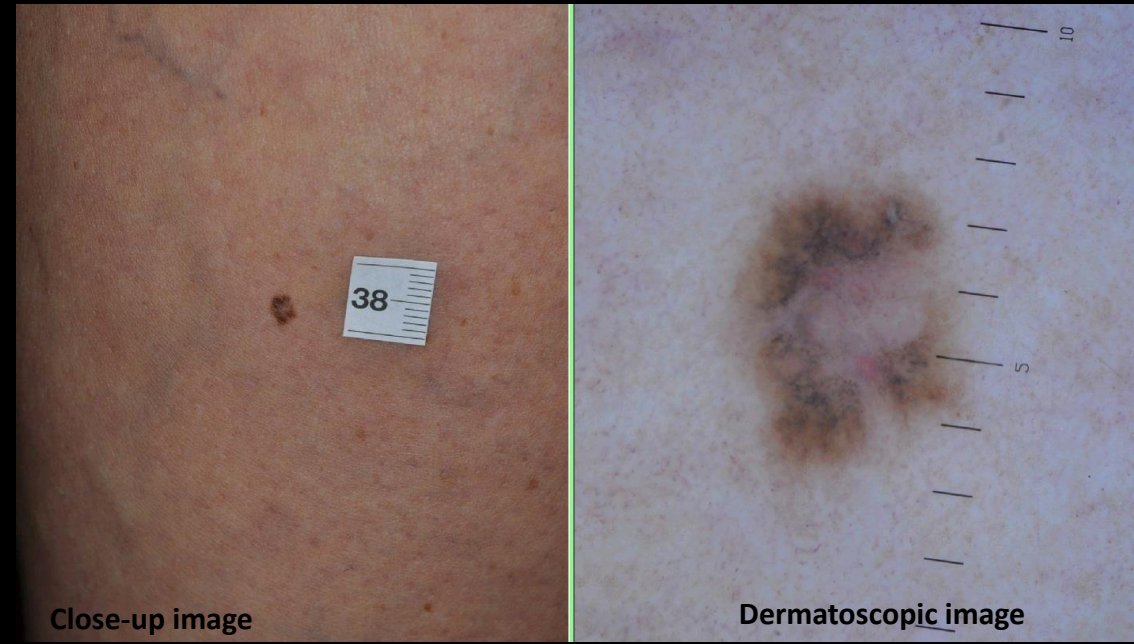
C



A



B



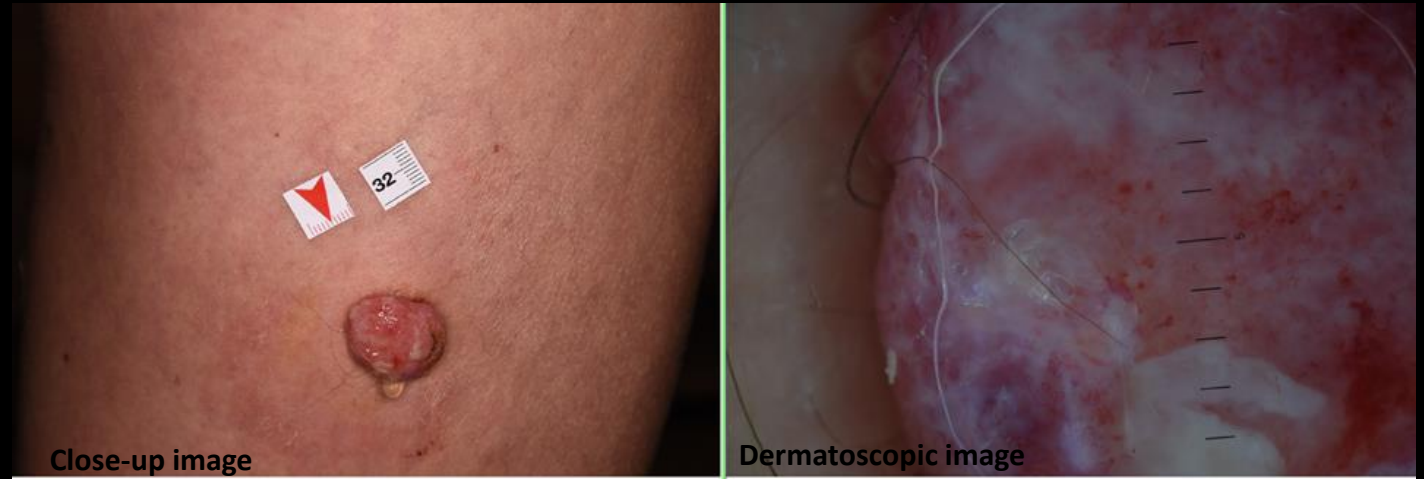
Multiple faces of melanoma

A: very advanced nodular melanoma

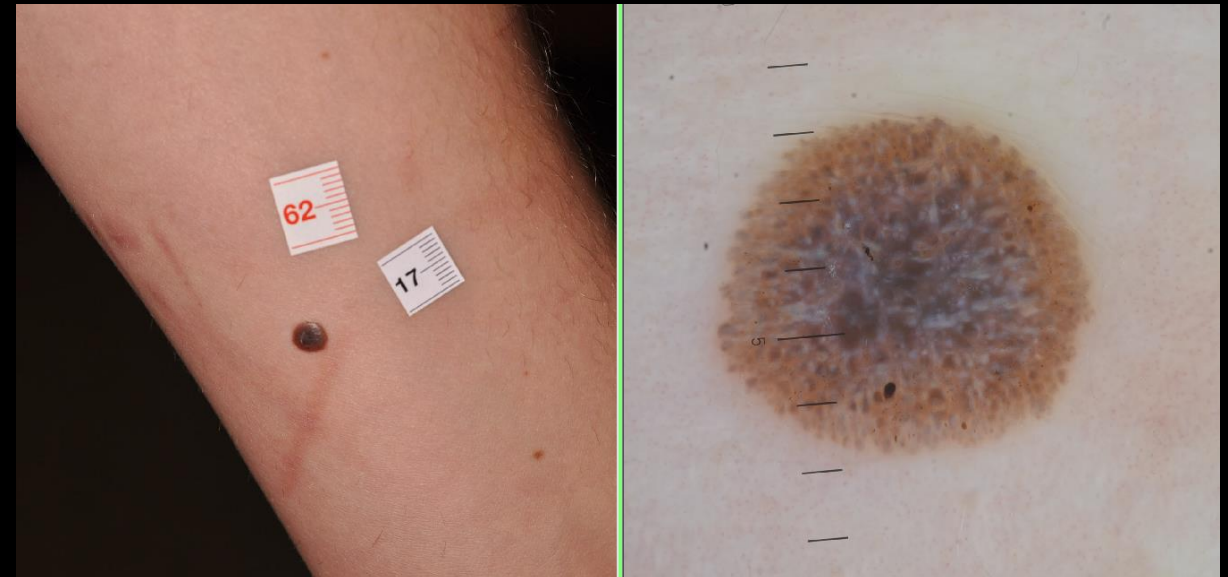
B: invasive melanoma

C: invasive melanoma

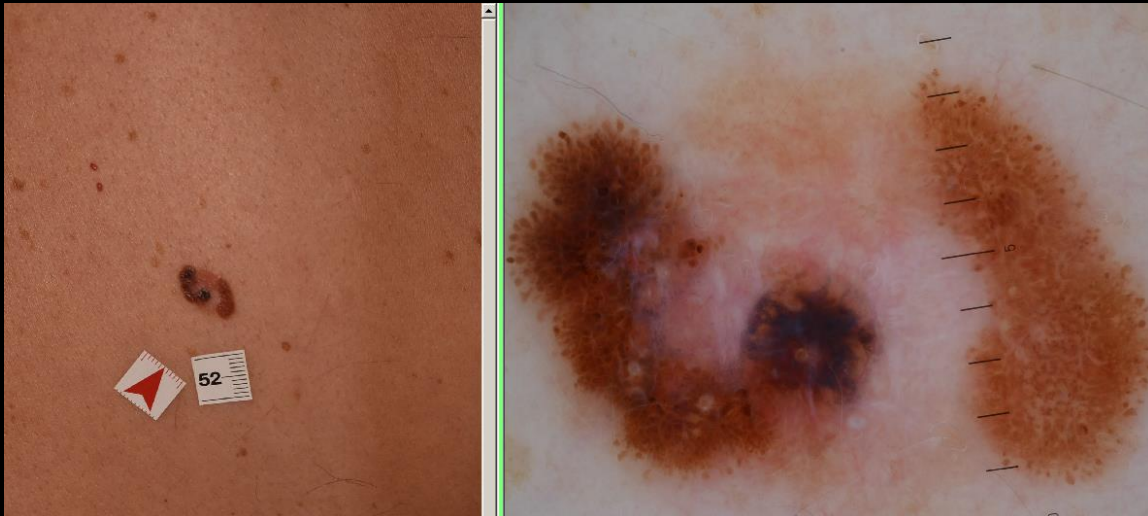
A



B



C



Keratosis or Melanoma?

Although this skin lesion might look like a seborrheic keratosis (read more in the benign lesions document), **NONE** of the well know clues are visible with a home dermatoscope.

This case should be suspicious and uploaded for medical assessment.



Close-up image



Dermatoscopic image

This is a malignant melanoma

Basal Cell Carcinoma

Basal cell carcinoma (BCC) is the most common type of skin cancer, usually developing in areas exposed to the sun, like the face, ears, neck, and back. It's caused by long-term sun exposure or indoor tanning. BCCs are usually slow-growing and don't often spread to other parts of the body, but they can cause significant damage to the skin around them if not treated.

Here's what to look for:

- Appearance: BCCs can look like open sores, red patches, shiny bumps or nodules, pink growths, or scars. They're often pearly or waxy.
- Texture: They may feel flat and firm to the touch, sometimes with a raised edge.
- Changes: They can bleed, ooze, or crust over, and seem to heal then reopen.
- Color: They might be the same color as your skin or slightly translucent, pearly, or brown, black, or blue if they contain pigment.

If you find a spot on your skin that keeps coming back after healing, or a new growth that doesn't go away, it's a good idea to have it checked by a doctor. Early detection and treatment of BCC are crucial to prevent extensive damage to the skin and surrounding tissues.



Close-up image

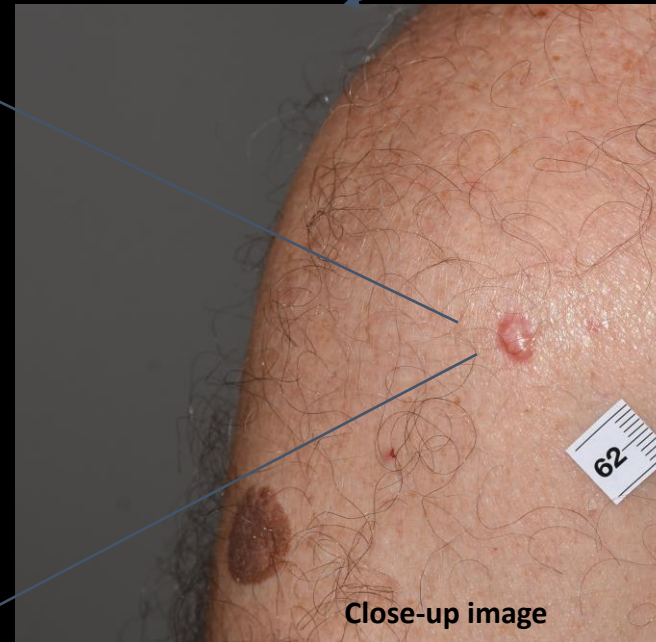
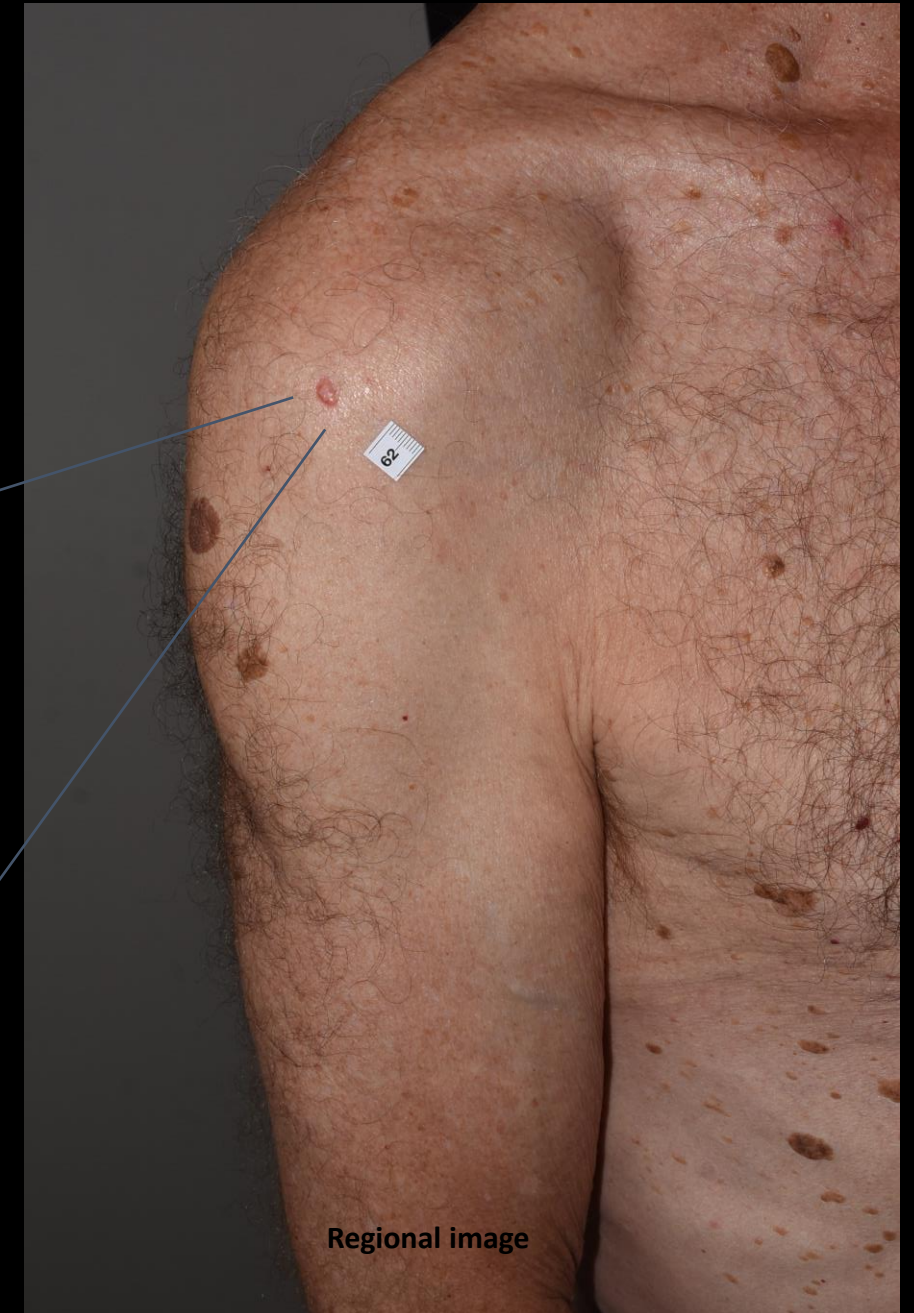


Close-up image

Dermatoscopic image

Basal Cell Carcinoma

These are multiple benign seborrheic keratoses over the torso, but one reddish, shiny skin lesion on the shoulder which is a basal cell skin cancer.



Multiple faces of Basal Cell Carcinoma

A: pigmented BCC

B: typical BCC

C: BCC on the scalp

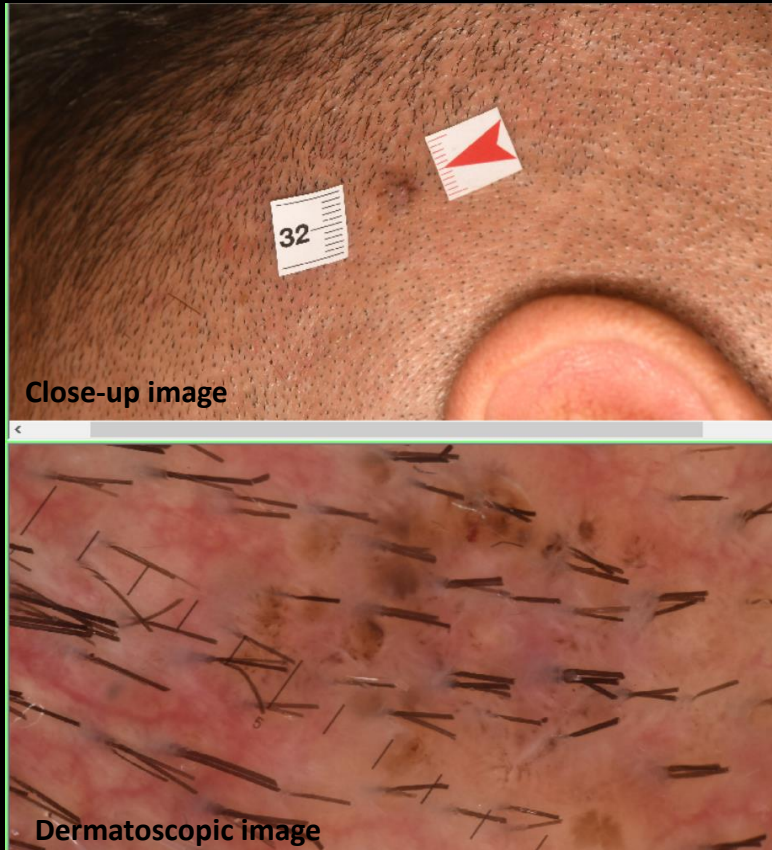
A



B



C



Squamous Cell Carcinoma

Squamous cell carcinoma (SCC) is a prevalent type of skin cancer that originates from the squamous cells on the skin's surface. It's commonly associated with prolonged sun exposure or use of tanning beds and often develops in sun-exposed areas like the face, ears, neck, and hands.

What to look for:

- Appearance: SCC can appear as scaly red patches, open sores, raised growths with a central depression, or warty bumps. They may crust, bleed, or have a scaly surface.
- Texture: The affected area may feel rough and thick, and can be tender.
- Change: These lesions can grow or change over time, often characterized by a crust or white scale.
- Color: Typically pink or red, SCC lesions may also have a white or silvery sheen.

SCC is noteworthy as **the most common skin tumor with the potential to metastasize**, meaning it can spread to other parts of the body. Despite being less renowned than melanoma, **the absolute number of people who die from SCC is comparable to that of melanoma**, making it a significant concern.

Persistent skin changes, such as lesions that are growing, not healing, or altering in appearance, should prompt a visit to the doctor. Early detection and treatment are crucial, as SCC can be effectively managed if caught in the early stages but poses a greater risk if it metastasizes.



Close-up image



Dermatoscopic image

Early-stage SCC

Bowen's disease, also known as squamous cell carcinoma in situ, is a form of early skin cancer that is confined to the outer layer of the skin and has not yet invaded the deeper layers.

Over time, if left untreated, Bowen's disease can progress to invasive squamous cell carcinoma (SCC), which can then spread to other parts of the body.

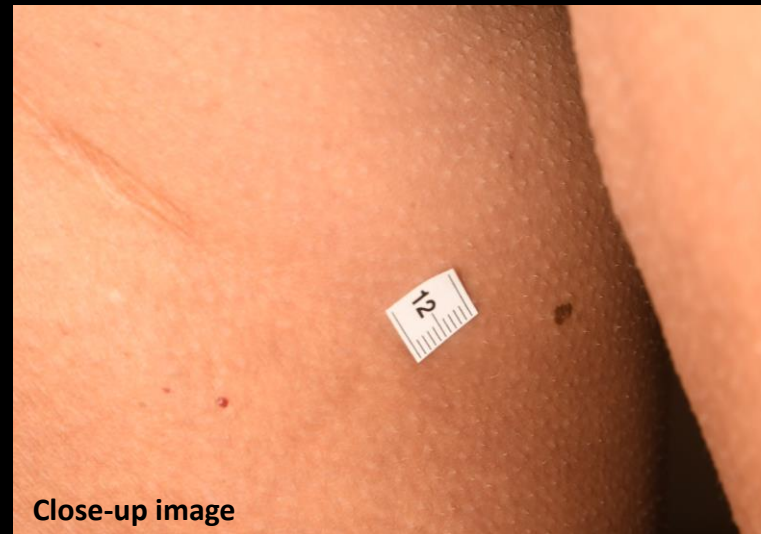
This transformation doesn't happen in all cases, but the potential is there, which is why early detection and treatment of Bowen's disease are important to prevent its progression to SCC.



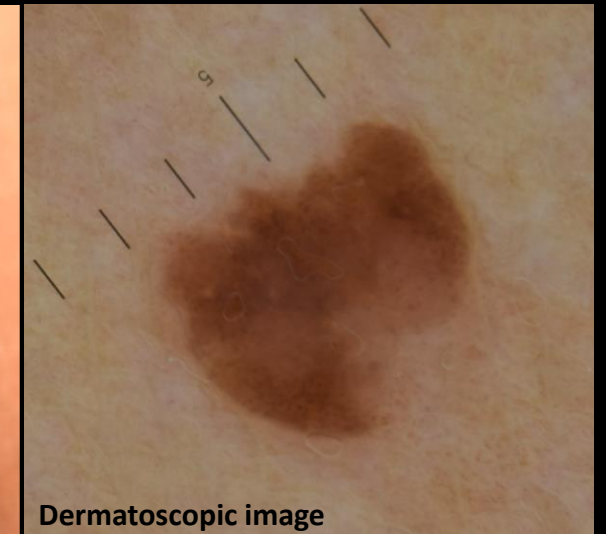
Close-up image



Dermatoscopic image



Close-up image



Dermatoscopic image

Other malignant skin tumors

Apart from melanoma, basal cell carcinoma (BCC), and squamous cell carcinoma (SCC), there are less common types of malignant skin cancer that people should be aware of.

If you notice anything on your skin that seems unusual, changes over time, or doesn't heal, it's important to be suspicious and have it checked out by a doctor. Unusual skin changes can include new growths, moles that change in appearance, sores that don't heal, or new skin discolorations. It's always better to err on the side of caution when it comes to skin health.



Check out our similar
presentation on benign skin
lesions.

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