

An [ACT]IVATED patient is informed, empowered, and engaged in their care.

- Get information about choosing a non-melanoma skin cancer specialist or treatment center
- Talk with family and friends about how you feel and how they can help you
- Find out what your insurance covers
- Get as much information as you can from reliable sources
- Talk openly with your doctor about your fears or concerns
- Determine if financial assistance is available

NON-MELANOMA SKIN CANCER RISK FACTORS

- Having lighter skin
- Chronic sun exposure (living in a warm climate, closer to the equator, having outdoor jobs or hobbies)
- Medications or conditions that suppress the immune system

NON-MELANOMA SKIN CANCER TREATMENT OPTIONS

- Most cases will not need any radiation, chemotherapy, or immunotherapy.
- For superficial basal cell cancer or early squamous cell cancers: topical medication like fluorouracil or imiquimod can be used
- For other types of basal cell cancers that have invaded deeper in the skin: an outpatient procedure to have the skin cancers cut out either with surgical excision or Mohs micrographic surgery
- For advanced squamous cell cancer, patients who are non-surgical candidates or patients who have distant metastatic disease: immunotherapy can be utilized, particularly anti-PD-1 inhibitors, hedgehog inhibitors, and immunotherapy being used in conjunction with radiation therapy

NON-MELANOMA SKIN CANCER IN NON-WHITE POPULATIONS

- In skin of color, squamous cell cancer may present at different locations in the body, such as the lower legs, feet, genital, or perianal skin. Make sure your dermatologist is examining all areas of your body!
- Basal cell cancer may look more blue or purple (instead of pink or red as in non-skin of color patients)
- 20 to 40 percent of all squamous cell cancers diagnosed in Black patients occur within scars or areas of chronic inflammation such as wounds
- A rare tumor called DFSP is more likely to occur in Black patients and can have a scar-like appearance. It involves the deeper skin, sometimes into the fat and even muscle
- May present with more aggressive disease

NON-MELANOMA SKIN CANCER EXPERT TIPS

[ACT]IVATION TIP: "Ask your oncologist or your treating dermatologist whether your non-melanoma skin cancer is advanced or unable to be cut out completely, or whether there is any metastatic disease if you would be a candidate for immunotherapy." - Dr. Silvina Pugliese

[ACT]IVATION TIP: "If you have an advanced squamous cell or basal cell cancer, ask your oncologist or your treating dermatologists, whether they are aware of any ongoing clinical trials that involve adjuvant and neoadjuvant use of systemic therapies and the treatment of squamous cell cancer." - Dr. Silvina Pugliese

[ACT]IVATION TIP: "Before making any kind of treatment decision, make sure you feel comfortable asking questions and you feel like all have been addressed. It's really important that you've received the opinions that you think are important for making that decision, and that you feel comfortable like you were able to make an informed decision." - Dr. Silvina Pugliese

[ACT]IVATION TIP: "If you are interested in participating in a clinical trial, in advancing medical knowledge, and you feel comfortable doing so, please ask your dermatologist or your oncologist if they're aware of any clinical trials for your type of skin cancer. Never feel any pressure to do this, it's complete optional, but of it can provide a novel treatment option for your cancer or allow you to have certain treatment that's not available through insurance at the moment." - Dr. Silvina Pugliese

NON-MELANOMA SKIN CANCER FACTS

- The most common non-melanoma skin cancers are basal cell cancer, with about 4 million cases diagnosed per year in the U.S. and squamous cell cancer, with approximately 2 million cases diagnosed
- These types of cancer look different than melanoma

NON-MELANOMA SKIN CANCER RESOURCES

- [ACCC](#)
- [CancerCare](#)
- [Cancer Grace](#)
- [Family Reach](#)
- [SkinCancer.net](#)
- [Triage Cancer](#)
- [Cancer Support Community](#)
- [The Skin Cancer Foundation](#)
- [MerkelCell.org](#)
- [AAD](#)