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New Patient Resource From NCCN Clears Up Confusion Around Highly Common Type of Skin Cancer

NCCN has published a new book of patient information that explains prevention, diagnosis and treatment for squamous cell skin cancer—the second-most common skin cancer (after basal cell cancer). Squamous cell and basal cell skin cancers are responsible for approximately 5 million annual incidents of nonmelanoma skin cancer in the United States,¹ making them more prevalent than all other types of cancer combined.² Incidence rates have been rising for squamous cell skin cancer in recent years, particularly in younger people.³ The new booklet, *NCCN Guidelines for Patients: Squamous Cell Skin Cancer*, is endorsed by the Save Your Skin Foundation, and made possible by funding through the NCCN Foundation. The guidelines are available to view and download free-of-charge at NCCN.org/patients, or via the NCCN Patient Guides for Cancer App.

“When people are first diagnosed with squamous cell skin cancer, many of them confuse it for melanoma, or think it could turn into melanoma,” explained Chrysalyne D. Schmults, MD, Dana-Farber/Brigham and Women’s Cancer Center, and Member of the NCCN Clinical Practice Guidelines in Oncology (NCCN Guidelines) Panel for Squamous Cell Skin Cancer. “The information contained in these guidelines helps clarify that this is an entirely different tumor. Instead of appearing like a brown spot or changing mole, these tumors usually look more like a persistent bump. Thankfully, the vast majority can be fully cured by an in-office removal procedure.”

“The NCCN Guidelines for Patients tackle complex information in a readable manner, making them an invaluable resource for people with cancer, as well as their caregivers and family members,” said Ken Braun, Project Benefits Specialist, Employers Health, and Squamous Cell Skin Cancer Survivor. “Squamous cell skin cancer was my second cancer diagnosis. After my physician first said I had cancer, I remembered very little during the rest of the exam. A friend sent me the NCCN Guidelines for Patients for my original cancer, which was the best resource for current, accurate information I have found. It gave me and my wife a measure of comfort and confidence, plus the ability to have meaningful discussions with my physicians about treatment and recovery.”

“Save Your Skin Foundation has every confidence that the new NCCN Guidelines for Squamous Cell Carcinoma will help patients understand and manage their skin cancer diagnosis, treatment, and recommended follow-up routine,” said Natalie Richardson, Managing Director, Save Your Skin Foundation. “This comprehensive resource gives skin cancer patients a reliable checklist to inform decisions in their care, which is much-needed for this common form of cancer, and even more so if patients present with advanced disease.”

Repeat incidences of squamous cell skin cancer can be common, but according to Dr. Schmults it is rarely due to an actual recurrence, but rather represents an entirely new tumor. She emphasized the importance of letting survivors know that getting more than one squamous cell tumor is not unusual. However, doctors and patients should work to minimize skin cancers because people who get many (10 or more) have a high risk of cancer spreading and being hard to cure. There are ways to prevent new tumors, including daily sunscreen use, prescription creams to reverse sun damage, and a certain type of vitamin pill.

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"Patients tend to be Caucasian and in their 70s or 80s at the time of diagnosis," said Dr. Schmults. "The tumors are most likely to appear on the head, neck, hands, feet, or shins. For reasons we don't yet understand, men are more likely than women to have negative outcomes, though the full cure rate is in the high 90th percentile for both. Anyone, at any age, should feel comfortable asking their dermatologist about a biopsy if they have a bump or flaky spot on their skin that lasts more than six-to-eight weeks or seems to be changing."

NCCN Guidelines for Patients and NCCN Quick Guide sheets DO NOT replace the expertise and clinical judgment of the clinician.

To help support these tools, visit NCCNFoundation.org/donate or text "GIVE" to 856-FOR-NCCN (856-367-6226).

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NCCN 2019 Annual Conference Included Focus on Patient Experience With Innovative Therapies, Plus Updates on Biomarkers, Biosimilars, and the Latest Research on Cancer Care

More than 1,500 cancer care professionals met in Orlando, Florida, March 21–23, for the NCCN 2019 Annual Conference. The conference offered more than 25 sessions presenting the latest treatment recommendations for lung, breast, prostate, colon, and other cancers, including new and emerging therapies. Other key topics included coordination of care, pain management during an opioid crisis, biosimilars, cancer-associated distress, biomarkers, genetic testing, and appropriate transition to end-of-life care. The keynote session highlighted the benefits and challenges of treatment with new and innovative therapies (eg, CAR T-cell) from the perspective of the patient and the clinicians caring for them.

"Cancer treatment is becoming more complex every day," said Robert W. Carlson, MD, Chief Executive Officer, NCCN. "It's increasingly important and valuable for clinicians to stay up-to-date on any new research. The NCCN 2019 Annual Conference focused on the practical management of patients with cancer, provided updates on NCCN Guidelines, and included other educational sessions on new treatments, therapies, and trends, and their application in patient care. Clinicians who attended should come away with a better understanding of how their patients can have the best possible outcomes in terms of health, emotional well-being, and overall experience."

The NCCN 2019 Annual Conference included learning opportunities for the entire healthcare team. There was a session titled NCCN Nursing Program: Advancing Oncology Nursing on March 20, which included clinical updates as well as best practices for managing malnutrition and immunotherapy symptom management and patient education. On March 24, the NCCN 2019 Oncology

“Clinicians who attend will come away with a better understanding of how their patients can have the best possible outcomes in terms of health, emotional well-being, and overall experience.”

Fellows Program: New Horizons in Quality Cancer Care presented treatment considerations for adolescents and young adults with cancer, strategies to promote wellness and prevent burnout, and the latest recommendations for cancer treatments.

The NCCN Oncology Research Program (ORP) showcased 145 poster presentations on subjects like best practices, pre-clinical oncology, clinical oncology, correlative/genomic, epidemiology/risks, outcomes and health services research, quality improvements, and bioinformatics/IT. The NCCN ORP also presented Young Investigator Awards, with support from the NCCN Foundation, to some of the most promising early-career researchers in the country.

The exhibition hall featured more than 20 advocacy groups representing a range of cancer types and supportive care services. It also included a reimbursement resource section and a health information technology corner.

The keynote discussion regarding the patient experience with innovative therapies was moderated by Frederick L. Locke, MD, Moffitt Cancer Center and featured Jeffrey Backer, MD, FACEP, Emergency Physician and Cancer Survivor, and Alix Beaupierre, BSN, RN, OCN, Moffitt Cancer Center. Dr. Locke was then joined for an emerging issues roundtable that included Stefanie Joho, Survivor, Health Advocate, and Consultant; Jennifer Malin, MD, PhD, UnitedHealth Group; John W. Sweetenham, MD, Huntsman Cancer Institute at the University of Utah; and Lalan S. Wilfong, MD, Texas Oncology.

There was also an invited presentation on the NCCN Harmonized Guidelines for Sub-Saharan Africa by Abubakar M. Bello, MD, of the National Hospital Abuja (Nigeria).

Additional faculty presenters included Eric Jonasch, MD, The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center; Gary H. Lyman, MD, MPH, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center/Seattle Cancer Care Alliance; James L. Mohler, MD, Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center; Anthony J. Olszanski, MD, RPh, Fox Chase Cancer Center; Linda Overholser, MD, MPH, University of Colorado Cancer Center; Margaret A. Tempero, MD, UCSF Helen Diller Family Comprehensive Cancer Center; and more.

Visit [NCCN.org/conference](https://www.nccn.org/conference) for the complete, timed agenda. Join the conversation online with the hashtag #NCCNac19.