

Title: A Case of Malignant Melanoma in a Fitzpatrick Type III Male Patient

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Case Presentation:

We present a 36-year old African American patient with a slow growing lesion on his left ear since he was 10 years old. The patient denied symptoms of fever, chills, nausea, vomiting, weight loss, and myalgias. He stated that the lesion was “burned off” in childhood, and observed recurrence of the nodule two years before visiting our clinic. The lesion measured 9mm in diameter upon presentation. Tangential skin biopsy confirmed malignant melanoma—a Clark level IV spitzoid and nodular with ulceration. A wide local excision surgery was performed for treatment, and the patient returned for a full body check.

Discussion

This case introduces a patient with severe case of Clark level IV melanoma on the ear. Cutaneous malignant melanoma rarely presents on the external ear, and makes up less than 5% of all cutaneous skin cancers. Moreover, malignant melanoma disproportionately affects fairer-skinned populations. However, patients of color are more likely to be diagnosed with an advanced stage malignant melanoma than their Caucasian counterparts, with worse survival outcomes. Limited literature indicates a need to address these underlying health disparities, as malignant melanoma may present differently in skin of color populations. Here, we stress the importance of earlier detection in skin of color patients for better prognoses.