

IMAGES IN DERMATOLOGY

Squamous Cell Carcinoma Uncovered: The Rapid Expansion of the Enemy

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An 87-year-old male patient attends to the Dermatology Department with a 3-month scalp lesion characterized by occasional bleeding, incomplete healing, and progressive growth. Physical examination reveals a crateriform neoformation, ulcerated with a central serohematic crust, elevated borders, and measuring 4 centimeters in diameter, located on the left parietal region.

Dermoscopy shows a non-melanocytic lesion with central ulceration and keratin mass, radial forked vessels, and white-yellowish circular areas.

An incisional biopsy was performed to determine the subtype and depth of invasion of the squamous cell carcinoma. The histopathological report describes: asymmetric proliferation of squamous cells with pale cytoplasm and nuclei showing karyomegaly and pleomorphism, abundant mitotic activity, infiltrating the dermis in strands and nests, presence of dyskeratotic cells and necrotic nests, along with a lichenoid lymphohistiocytic infiltrate in the underlying and peritumoral dermis.

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Squamous cell carcinoma (SCC) is characterized by friable, rapidly growing tumor lesions with a tendency to bleed. These lesions usually appear on damaged skin or precancerous lesions such as actinic keratosis, which is associated with prolonged exposure to UVB and UVA radiation.¹

SCC may be in situ, confined to the epidermis, or invasive, affecting the dermis and underlying tissues.² Although it has a high recovery rate, up to 5% of cases may metastasize, primarily involving the retroauricular and submandibular lymph node chains.³

Early identification and treatment of high-risk patients is essential to control SCC.⁴ Metastasis to regional lymph nodes is the main factor of poor prognosis, with key predictors including perineural and vascular invasion. Resection and histological examination of the sentinel lymph node (SLN) contribute to better disease control and reduced surgical morbidity.⁵

INFORMED CONSENT

The patient included in this study signed an informed consent form, approving the use of their clinical data and images exclusively for research and scientific publication purposes. It is guaranteed that no personal information has been disclosed and no photographs allowing patient identification have been used.

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