

Basal Cell Carcinoma: Advances In Treatment And Research

Basal cell carcinoma (BCC) is the most common type of skin cancer, accounting for approximately 75% of all cases. BCC typically develops on sun-exposed areas of the skin, such as the face, neck, arms, and legs. It is a slow-growing cancer that rarely spreads to other parts of the body. However, if left untreated, BCC can cause significant disfigurement.

In recent years, there have been significant advances in the treatment and research of BCC. New treatments have been developed that are more effective and less invasive than traditional methods. Researchers are also working to better understand the causes of BCC and to develop new strategies for prevention.



Basal Cell Carcinoma: Advances in Treatment and Research by Caroline Braun

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 39075 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Print length : 349 pages



Symptoms of Basal Cell Carcinoma

BCC typically appears as a small, pearly bump on the skin. The bump may be pink, red, or brown in color. It may also be slightly raised or flat. Over time, the bump may grow larger and develop a central ulcer.

Other symptoms of BCC include:

* Bleeding or crusting * Pain or itching * Changes in the shape or size of the bump

Causes of Basal Cell Carcinoma

BCC is caused by damage to the DNA of skin cells. This damage can be caused by ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun or from tanning beds. People who have fair skin, a history of sunburn, or who spend a lot of time outdoors are at increased risk for BCC.

Diagnosis of Basal Cell Carcinoma

BCC is diagnosed by a dermatologist through a physical examination of the skin. The dermatologist may also order a biopsy, which involves removing a small sample of skin for examination under a microscope.

Treatment of Basal Cell Carcinoma

The treatment of BCC depends on the size, location, and stage of the cancer. Treatment options include:

* **Surgery:** Surgery is the most common treatment for BCC. The surgeon will remove the cancer and a small margin of healthy skin around it. * **Mohs surgery:** Mohs surgery is a specialized type of surgery that is used to treat BCC that is recurrent or that is located in a difficult-to-treat area. Mohs surgery involves removing the cancer one layer at a time until all of the

cancer cells have been removed. * **Radiation therapy:** Radiation therapy uses high-energy beams of radiation to kill cancer cells. Radiation therapy may be used to treat BCC that is large or that is located in a sensitive area. * **Cryotherapy:** Cryotherapy uses liquid nitrogen to freeze and kill cancer cells. Cryotherapy may be used to treat BCC that is small and that is located on the surface of the skin. * **Topical medications:** Topical medications, such as imiquimod and 5-fluorouracil, can be applied to the skin to kill cancer cells. Topical medications may be used to treat BCC that is small and that is located on the surface of the skin.

Prognosis of Basal Cell Carcinoma

The prognosis for BCC is excellent. The vast majority of BCC cases are successfully treated with surgery. However, BCC can recur in some cases. The risk of recurrence is higher for BCC that is large, that is located in a difficult-to-treat area, or that has been treated with radiation therapy.

Prevention of Basal Cell Carcinoma

The best way to prevent BCC is to protect your skin from the sun. You can do this by:

- * Wearing sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 30 or higher *
- Reapplying sunscreen every two hours *
- Wearing protective clothing, such as hats and sunglasses *
- Seeking shade during the peak hours of sunlight (10am to 4pm) *
- Avoiding tanning beds

Research on Basal Cell Carcinoma

Researchers are working to better understand the causes of BCC and to develop new strategies for prevention and treatment. Some of the most promising areas of research include:

* Identifying the genetic mutations that lead to BCC * Developing new drugs that target these mutations * Developing new methods for delivering radiation therapy * Improving surgical techniques for BCC removal

BCC is the most common type of skin cancer, but it is also one of the most treatable. With early diagnosis and treatment, the prognosis for BCC is excellent. Researchers are working to better understand the causes of BCC and to develop new strategies for prevention and treatment.



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