

Periocular Skin Cancer

This material will help you understand periocular skin cancer and how it is treated.

What is periocular skin cancer?

Periocular skin cancer is a type of cancer that develops on the skin around the eyes. The cancer may be a painless nodule or look like a sore. It can cause the skin to bleed, crust, and/or become infected with ulcers. In some cases, the cancer can deform the structure of the eyelid and eyelashes. If left untreated, periocular skin cancer can grow and invade surrounding tissues. Some types can also spread to other parts of the body.

What causes periocular skin cancer?

The biggest risk factor for developing periocular skin cancer is exposure to the sun. People with fair skin and/or a family history of skin cancer are particularly at risk.

How is periocular skin cancer treated?

Surgical removal is the most effective treatment for periocular skin cancer. The goals of surgery are to completely remove the cancer and reconstruct any damage caused by the cancer. Your doctor will recommend different surgical procedures depending on the size of your cancer. Your doctor may use a microscope to remove the lesion layer by layer or use frozen sections. If the cancer causes large defects, skin grafts may be required during reconstruction.

Periocular skin cancer should be treated promptly. This helps reduce the amount of tissue that has to be removed. It also makes it more likely that the tumor will be removed completely. Early treatment can also prevent the cancer from spreading to other parts of the body.

What are the risks of surgery?

There is a small risk of reoccurrence even when the cancer is completely removed. Bleeding and infection are also risks, but they are uncommon.

For more information, scan this code with your smartphone or visit the website listed.



<http://www.asoprs.org/files/public/InfoSkinCancer.pdf>

Disclaimer: This document contains information and/or instructional materials developed by the University of Michigan Health System (UMHS) for the typical patient with your condition. It may include links to online content that was not created by UMHS and for which UMHS does not assume responsibility. It does not replace medical advice from your health care provider because your experience may differ from that of the typical patient. Talk to your health care provider if you have any questions about this document, your condition or your treatment plan.

Author: Kristin Maurer, MPH candidate
Reviewers: Christine Nelson, MD and Gale Oren, MILS

Patient Education by [University of Michigan Health System](#) is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported License](#).

Last Revised 03/2015