



Unit 2
34 – 42 Cohen Street
Belconnen
2617
Tel: 02 5101 4061

Email: reception@skinmedicsact.com.au

www.skinmedicsact.com.au

Non-melanoma skin cancers – BCC (Basal Cell Carcinoma) & SCC (Squamous Cell Carcinoma)

Key Facts:

- There are two main types: basal cell carcinoma (BCC) and squamous cell carcinoma (SCC).
- BCC accounts for about 70% of non-melanoma skin cancers. It begins in the lower layer of the epidermis (top, outer layer of the skin). It can appear anywhere on the body but most commonly develops on parts of the body that receive high or intermittent sun exposure (head, face, neck, shoulders and back).
- SCC accounts for about 30% of non-melanoma skin cancers. It begins in the upper layer of the epidermis and usually appears where the skin has had most exposure to the sun (head, neck, hands, forearms and lower legs). SCC generally grows quickly over weeks or months.
- A third group of lesions called keratinocyte dysplasias includes solar keratosis, Bowenoid keratosis and squamous cell carcinoma in-situ (Bowen's disease/IEC). These are not invasive cancers, however may require treatment as some may develop into non-melanoma skin cancers

Basal cell carcinoma (BCC) signs and symptoms

BCC often has no symptoms and tends to grow slowly without spreading to other parts of the body.

Symptoms of BCC can include:

- a pearly lump
- a scaly, dry area that is shiny and pale or bright pink in colour
- often mistaken for a pimple like lesion

Squamous cell carcinoma (SCC) signs and symptoms

Symptoms of SCC may include:



Unit 2
34 – 42 Cohen Street
Belconnen
2617
Tel: 02 5101 4061

Email: reception@skinmedicsact.com.au

www.skinmedicsact.com.au

- thickened red, scaly spot
- rapidly growing lump
- looks like a sore that has not healed
- may be tender to touch

IF YOU HAVE A SORE OR PIMPLE LIKE LESION THAT DOES NOT FULLY RESOLVE OR HEAL IN 4 WEEKS OF ITS APPEARANCE YOU SHOULD GET THIS CHECK AS THE CHANCE OF IT BEING A SKIN CANCER IS HIGH

Treatment for non-melanoma skin cancer

The type of treatment depends on the type and size of the cancer and where it is located.

Biopsy

THE FIRST STEP IN MOST CASES - Sometimes, all the cancer is removed with the biopsy and in this case it will be the only treatment received.

Surgery

Surgery is the most common treatment. Non-melanoma skin cancers are almost always removed (usually under a local anaesthetic) with a margin of health skin to make sure that all of the cancerous cells have been taken. In more advance cases more complex surgery maybe required under general anaesthesia in a hospital setting – occasionally additional treatment like chemotherapy or radiotherapy may be required in the most serious cases or in areas where surgery is challenging.

Other treatments

In specific cases non-melanoma cancer may also be removed by cryotherapy (using liquid nitrogen to rapidly freeze the cancer off), curettage (scraping), PDT therapy, or cauterly (burning). This is in limited cases only.