



SKIN CANCER (OTHER THAN MELANOMA)

A RARE CASE OF SQUAMOUS CELL CARCINOMA DEVELOPING WITHIN A PHOTO-PROTECTED VITILIGO PATCH.

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BACKGROUND: Vitiligo is an acquired pigmentary disorder of the skin with an estimated prevalence of 0,5-4% in both adults and children. It is a multifactorial polygenic disorder with a complex pathogenesis resulting in destruction of melanocytes. The lack of melanin predisposes vitiliginous skin to UV radiation damage which may lead to cutaneous neoplasia. Squamous cell carcinoma (SCC) is a common malignancy of keratinocytes with UV radiation being the most important risk factor for its occurrence. Development of SCC in vitiligo is rare as suggested by sporadic case reports and when it does occur it is in macules with repeated sunlight exposure or following Psoralen and ultraviolet A (PUVA) treatment. We report a rare and curious case of SCC developing within a photo-protected vitiligo patch.

OBSERVATION: This is a case of an 80 year old black African male patient with a longstanding history of vitiligo patches over the left hip and inguinal area. He never received topical treatment nor PUVA for the vitiligo. He is HIV negative and neither smokes nor drinks. He presented with a 4 year history of an enlarging fungating mass developing within the vitiliginous skin. The mass measures 10cm by 5cm, is exudative with central ulceration and regional lymph adenopathy. There is a family history of vitiligo but none of skin malignancies. Incisional biopsy confirmed a well differentiated invasive squamous cell carcinoma. He is now under the care of surgeons for a wide local excision and further management.

KEY MESSAGE: The association of vitiligo and cutaneous neoplasia has for years been a controversial subject as evidenced by a few scattered reports. Whether the dysregulation of immune function promotes oncogenesis or not remains obscure. We report this case because of its rarity and as further evidence of an association between SCC and vitiligo. It may be prudent for clinicians to follow up vitiligo patients on a long term basis for early detection of malignant change.

