

EPIDEMIOLOGY

THE INCIDENCE AND SURVIVAL OF MELANOMA AND NONMELANOMA SKIN CANCER IN PATIENTS WITH VITILIGO: A NATIONWIDE POPULATION-BASED STUDY IN KOREA

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Background: While studies report lower incidence of skin cancer in Caucasian vitiligo patients compared to their healthy counterpart, the skin cancer incidence in Asian vitiligo patients is unknown.

Objectives: We sought to quantify the incidence of melanoma and nonmelanoma skin cancer (NMSC) in Korean vitiligo patients and compare it with their matched non-vitiligo controls.

Methods: A retrospective, nationwide population-based cohort study was performed. We selected 131,245 incident vitiligo cases between January 2005 and December 2017 from the Korean National Health Insurance database and 2,624,900 matched controls at a 1:20 ratio by age, sex. Multivariable Cox regression analysis (adjusted for sex, age at vitiligo diagnosis, and UV treatment) was performed to estimate the hazard ratio (HZ) of skin cancer in vitiligo patients.

Results: Vitiligo patient were followed-up for 6.34 years whereas the mean follow-up period for matched controls was 6.27. The adjusted HR of melanoma in vitiligo patients was 3.41 (95% CI, 2.35-4.94) and that of NMSC was 1.31 (95% CI, 1.08-1.60). The adjusted HRs for melanoma and NMSC in the vitiligo population without a history of UV treatment were 3.47 (95% CI, 2.39-5.04) and 1.39 (95% CI, 1.13-1.69) respectively.

Conclusions: Unlike in Caucasians, the risk of skin cancer was increased in the Korean vitiligo population. Despite the findings, but it is noteworthy that the skin cancer incidence in Korean vitiligo patients is lower than that of their Caucasian counterpart. With possible ethnic difference in susceptibility to skin cancer, skin cancer surveillance in the vitiligo population may be adjusted to race.





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