

Photodynamic Therapy of skin cancer attracts high interest at World Congress of Dermatology  
[Press Release]  
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*Photodynamic Therapy of skin cancer attracts high interest at World Congress of Dermatology as new comparative data is released and 5 year efficacy and safety is reviewed to 500 dermatologists in Buenos Aires.*

Skin cancer is one of the most common forms of cancer in the world and at a special symposium during the World Congress of Dermatology last week, 500 dermatologists from all over the world discussed how photodynamic therapy (PDT) is becoming important in the treatment of non-melanoma skin cancer (NMSC). They were especially interested in how PDT can be used repeatedly and with less scarring, as well as on larger surfaces of skin.

The worldwide experience suggests that topical photodynamic therapy (PDT) is both effective and highly rated by patients. The International Society for Photodynamic Therapy recently performed a systematic literature review of the evidence of PDT in non-melanoma skin cancer. Around 90% of non-hyperkeratotic actinic keratoses, a pre-stage of skin cancer, of the head and neck were cleared 3 months following topical PDT. An intra-individual comparison study has shown equivalence of Metvix and cryotherapy over 2 treatments, but with superior cosmesis following PDT.

Long-term clinical follow-up of transplant patients treated with Metvix brings the first hard evidence of a therapy that can not only treat, but may also prevent, the recurrence of AK lesions in this high-risk population, thus confirming the results of prior small clinical studies.

“PDT will be used for a larger number of patients in the future”, concluded Luís Antônio R. Torezan, M D, Department of Dermatology, Universidade de São Paulo, Brazil. He highlighted the advantages of PDT in large areas to prevent scarring: “All new evidence confirms that PDT is effective and well tolerated, with consistently favourable cosmetic outcome, particularly beneficial in sensitive areas such as large AK lesions in the face. With both international guidelines and the new opportunities like prevention of skin cancer in field AK areas, PDT will provide physicians a tool for wider use in the growing number of skin cancer patients worldwide.”

Metvix is approved in the EU/EEA for treatment of actinic keratosis, Bowen's Disease and Basal Cell Carcinoma.

Non melanoma skin cancer (NMSC) is a classification that covers most skin cancers, skin cancers that normally develop on sun-exposed areas of the body, like the face, ear, neck, lips, and the backs of the hands.

Actinic keratoses (AK) is the most common premalignant skin lesion, frequently found on the hands, arms, head and other sun exposed areas. AK can develop into squamous cell carcinoma (SCC), which is an aggressive type of cancer that grows invasively into deeper layers of the skin and can spread and form metastases.

Basal cell carcinoma (BCC) is the most common malignant skin cancer. They are locally aggressive tumours that rarely metastasise (spread to other organs), but destroy surrounding tissue.

Bowen's disease (BD) is a pre-stage of SCC where the tumour has not spread, but has the potential to progress into invasive squamous cell carcinoma. It usually looks like a slow growing red, scaly patch.

Photodynamic therapy (PDT) is an effective, targeted treatment that destroys cancer cells without harming surrounding tissue. Red light is used to activate a light sensitive substance that accumulates selectively in cancer cells.