Recognizing Melanocytic Lesions

James E. Fitzpatrick, M.D.

University of Colorado Health Sciences Center

No conflicts of interest to report

Pigmented Skin Lesions

- Pigmented keratinocyte neoplasias
 - Solar lentigo
 - Seborrheic keratosis
 - Pigmented actinic keratosis (uncommon)
- Melanocytic hyperactivity
 - Ephelides (freckles)
 - Café-au-lait macules
- Melanocytic neoplasia
 - Simple lentigo (lentigo simplex)
 - Benign nevocellular nevi
 - Dermal melanocytoses
 - Atypical (dysplastic) nevus
 - Malignant melanocytic lesions



Proliferation of keratinocytes with ↑ melanin
 Variable hyperplasia in number of melanocytes

• Pathogenesis- ultraviolet light damage

Solar Lentigo

- Older patients
- Light skin type
- Photodistributed
- Benign course
- Problemdistinguishing form lentigo maligna



Seborrheic Keratosis "Barnacles of Aging"

- Epithelial proliferation
- Common- 89% of geriatric population
- Pathogenesis unknown
 - -Follicular tumor (best evidence)
 - -FGFR3 mutations in a subset

Seborrheic Keratosis Clinical Features

- Distribution- trunk>head and neck>extremities
- Primary lesion
 - Exophytic papule with velvety to verrucous surface- "stuck on appearance"
 - -Color- white, gray, tan, brown, black
- Complications- inflammation, pruritus, and simulation of cutaneous malignancy
- Malignancy potential- none to low (BCC?)



Seborrheic Keratosisskin tag-like variant







Café-au-Lait Spots

- Subtle increase in number of melanocytes with increased melanin production
- Congenital or early childhood
- Distribution- trunk and proximal extremities
- Typically solitary
- Multiple lesions associated with NF
 - -Prepubertal child- 6 or more > 5 mm
 - -Crowe's sign



Simple Lentigo (Lentigo Simplex)

- Lentiginous hyperplasia + melanocytic hyperplasia
 - Closely related to junctional nevus
 - May evolve into junctional nevus



Simple Lentigo (Lentigo Simplex) Clinical Features

- May occur at any age
- May be single or multiple
- Distribution- skin or mucous membranes
- Primary lesion- tan to brown to black macule usually measuring 5 mm or less
- Multiple lentigines
 - Peutz-Jeghers -syndrome
 - Carney's syndrome
 - LEOPARD syndrome
 - Centrofacial lentiginosis
- Malignancy potential- no statistics









Nevocellular Nevi (Moles, Melanocytic Nevi)

- Growth patterns
 - -Junctional nevus
 - Intradermal nevus
 - -Compound nevus
- Number of nevi (Caucasians)
 - -20 years of age = 20 nevi
 - -Australian study- number peaks in 2nd & 3rd decade
 - Men = 43 nevi
 - Women = 27 nevi

Nevocellular Nevi Clinical Features

- Age of onset- infancy to adulthood
- Distribution- any skin surface including mucous membranes
 - -Number of nevi increased on sun-exposed skin

Junctional Nevus Clinical Features

- Location anywhere- especially common on plantar and palmar surfaces
- Size- variable, 1-5 mm
- Primary lesion
 - Macule or subtle papule
 - Surface- typically smooth
 - Color- tan to brown to black





Intradermal Nevus Clinical Features

- Location- head and neck most common
- Size- variable, most less than 6 mm
- Primary lesion
 - -Papule or nodule
 - -Dome-shaped, papillated, pedunculated, cerebriform
 - -Color- skin-colored to tan to light brown





Compound Nevus Clinical Features

- Trunk and proximal extremities- most common
- Size- variable, most less than 6 mm
- Primary lesion
 - -Papule or nodule
 - -Dome-shaped, papillated or pedunculated
 - -Color- tan to brown to black



Melanocytic Nevi Clinical and Histological Variants

- Halo nevus
- Meyerson's nevus
- Spitz nevus
- Pigmented spindle cell nevus
- Desmoplastic nevus
- Nevus spilus







Multiple Spitz Nevi

Histologically difficult to differentiate from melanoma









Nevocellular Nevi Treatment Options

- Standard of care
 - -Tangential (shave) biopsy
 - -Punch biopsy
 - -Excision biopsy
- Outside of the standard of care
 - -Electrodessication
 - -Cryotherapy
 - -Dermabrasion (exception- congenital nevus?)
 - -Laser







Congenital Nevi

- Congenital pigmented lesions- 2.5% of newborns
- Congenital nevi- 1% of newborns
- Congenital nevi > 10 cm- 1 in 20,000

Congenital Nevi

- May be solitary or multiple
- May affect any cutaneous surface
- Primary lesion is 1 mm to huge – Presence of dark hairs- no clinical significance
- Complications
 - -Head, neck, posterior midline- cranial and/or leptomeningeal melanocytosis
 - -Melanoma
- Associations- neurofibromatosis







Medium (1.5-19.9 cm) and Multiple Small (< 1.5 cm) Congenital Nevi



Giant (≥ 20 cm) Congenital Nevus with satellite lesions





Blue Nevus

- Definition- dermal proliferation of melanocytes that produce abundant melanin
- Blue color- optical effect where longer wavelengths are absorbed and shorter wavelengths are reflect back
- Other dermal melanocytoses
 - -Mongolian spot
 - -Nevus of Ota
 - Nevus of Ito



Blue Nevus Clinical Features

- Congenital (1:3000) or acquired (4% of adults)
- Most common in Asians and whites, uncommon in blacks
- Primary lesion- blue to blue-gray to bluewhite papule or nodule
- Size- 1 mm to 2 cm

Blue Nevus Variants

- Common blue nevus
- Cellular blue nevus
- Combined nevus
- Malignant blue nevus (very rare)





Mongolian Spot





Dysplastic Nevus

(Atypical Nevus, Clark's Nevus, Nevus With Cytologic Atypia and Architectural Disorder)

- Acquired melanocytic proliferation
 - Epidermal and/or dermal proliferation of cytologically atypical nevomelanocytes
 - Abnormal growth pattern (architectural disorder)
- Sporadic or familial
- Clinical importance
 - Ten studies- 6.6%-70.3% of melanomas are contiguous with dysplastic nevi
 - Familial dysplastic nevus syndrome- risk of melanoma approaches 100%

Dysplastic Nevi Clinical Features

- Males = Females
- Age of onset- usually apparent by 20 years
- Location- any cutaneous site especially trunk
- Number of lesions- solitary to hundreds
- Primary lesion
 - Round to oval to irregular
 - Variegation in color- tans, brown, black, reds
 - Margins- often indistinct (fuzzy), pigment bleeds into surrounding skin, irregular margins
 - Size- no limit









Familial Atypical Nevi (FAMMM syndrome)

- Numerous atypical nevi
- History of melanoma and MM-situ









Malignant Melanoma Clinical Variants

 Superficial spreading- 	65%
• Nodular-	20%
• Lentigo maligna melanoma-	10%
• Acral lentiginous-	4%
Desmoplastic-	1%







Melanoma in-situ (Lentigo Maligna)



















Ulcerated Nodular Melanoma













Visual Diagnosis of Melanoma "Room for Improvement"

<u>Melanoma</u>	Non-dermatologists	<u>Dermatologists</u>
6 of 6	2%	27%
5 of 6	10%	42%
4 of 6	26%	23%
3 of 6	33%	8%
2 of 6	22%	-
1 of 6	7%	-
<u>J Am Acad Dermatol</u> 14:555-560, 1986		

Malignant Melanoma ABCDE Guidelines

- $A = \underline{A}$ symmetry
- $B = \underline{B}$ order irregularity (notches, pseudopods)
- C = <u>C</u>olor variegation (black blue, brown, tan, white, gray, red)
- $D = \underline{D}iameter$ greater than 6 mm
- $E = \underline{E}$ volution (change, bleeding)



