

MALIGNANT MELANOMA ARISING IN A SPECKLED LENTIGINOUS NEVUS.

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SUMMARY

We describe the case of a 42 year old woman who presented malignant melanoma on an 8 -cm acquired speckled lentiginous nevus on the inferior part of her leg. Although melanoma arising in speckled lentiginous nevus is a rare occurrence, dermatologists and plastic surgeons need to be aware that it may occur.

Background

Speckled lentiginous nevus (or *nevus spilus*) is a relatively common cutaneous lesion that can be congenital or, more frequently, acquired. Its prevalence is about 2% among the general population and 0.1% among newborn children. Its dimensions vary from 2 to 10 cm in diameter, but wider lesions have been described. It is clinically characterized by a flat hyperpigmented patch appearing at birth or in early childhood, that progresses to the more noticeable pigmented black, brown or red-brown macules and papules over months or years (1,2). Generally, it is benign, but there are a few reports of malignant melanoma developing within these lesions, as is the case in our patient.

Case Report

We describe the case of a 42 year old woman, who presented with an 8-cm acquired speckled lentiginous nevus on the inferior part of her leg. During a recent dermoscopic visit, a thicker, darker and irregular pattern of one of the maculas was noted, so an incisional biopsy of that part of the lesion was taken (Figure 1). The histological diagnosis was malignant melanoma in situ, so a wider excision was performed in order to completely remove the speckled nevus. A full thickness skin graft was taken from the abdomen, where the patient had a Cesarean section scar, in order to cover the bare area on the leg. The definitive histological results revealed a residual melanoma in situ adjacent to the area where the incisional biopsy was performed (Figure 2).

Conclusion

Breitkopf et al recorded only 2 malignant melanoma cases among 946 patients with nevus spilus (3) . From reported that among 2000 melanomas she observed during a 15-year period, more arose from speckled nevus (n = 3) than from large classic congenital melanocytic nevi (n = 1), suggesting that nevus spilus may actually present a greater risk than large congenital nevi (4) .

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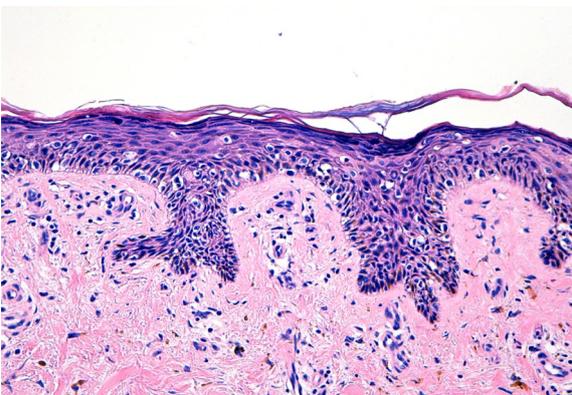
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Figure 1: speckled lentiginous nevus on the inferior part of the leg after incisional biopsy.



Figure 2: Junctional melanocytic proliferation composed of polymorphic elements arranged in nests and single elements. Dyscrete lymphocytic infiltrates in the dermis with melanophages. The findings are suggestive of malignant melanoma in situ.



Although melanoma arising in speckled lentiginous nevus is a rare occurrence, dermatologists and plastic surgeons need to be aware that it could occur. Therefore, a dermoscopy should be performed periodically in order to detect the earliest possible malignant change within the lesion, and in suspected cases incisional biopsies and/or surgical excision is recommended.

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