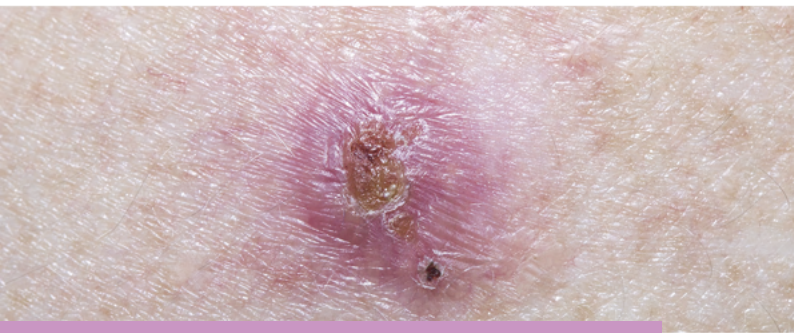


BASAL CELL CARCINOMA

Basal Cell Carcinoma (BCC) is the most common form of skin cancer. BCCs present most frequently in the areas of the body exposed to the sun: the face, neck, ears, and forearms. These growths or lesions occur in the skin's basal cells, which are in the innermost layer of the epidermis.



- BCCs rarely spread or metastasize to other parts of the body and, only in extremely rare cases, are life-threatening. However, if BCCs are left untreated, they can invade surrounding tissue and cause destruction and disfigurement.
- Early detection is essential to successful treatment.
- BCCs can appear in many forms, including open sores that don't heal, red patches, shiny nodules, or as a raised-edge growth.
- Although exposure to the sun can put anyone at risk of developing BCC, people with fair/light skin, eyes and hair are at the highest risk. A family history of BCC can also increase chances of development. Less common contributing factors can include contact with arsenic, radiation exposure, burns, scars, or chronic inflammatory skin conditions.
- Traditionally, older people are most commonly affected. However, as the number of new cases increases, the average age of patients developing BCC has decreased.



Reducing the risk of BBC



Avoid overexposure to sunlight.

Following sun protection guidelines can help reduce the risks associated with atypical nevus, especially between the hours of 10 am and 4 pm when the sun is directly overhead. It is important to remember that, even on overcast days, damaging ultraviolet rays can pass through clouds. Use caution when around water, sand, and snow because all can reflect the sun's rays.



Take protective measures.

Wear broad-brimmed hats, tightly-woven clothing, and sunglasses.



Use sunscreen.

Choose a sunscreen with minimum SPF (Sun Protection Factor) of 30 with protection from both UVA and UVB rays. Reapply often on all exposed skin, including the lips.



Always avoid artificial tanning devices and tanning salons.



Check your skin regularly.

Examine your entire body, and report any suspicious lesions to your dermatologist.