

Rare Skin Tumors

In the World Health Organisation's Classification of Skin tumors in 2006, literally hundreds of benign and malignant tumors are catalogued. Fortunately, most of the malignant tumors, (apart from BCC, SCC, and Melanoma) are rare.

Though rare, dermatologic surgeons are very familiar with these tumors. Some such as Atypical fibroxanthoma (AFX), Microcystic Adnexal Carcinoma (MAC), Adenoid Cystic Carcinoma (ACC) Sebaceous Carcinoma, and Extra-Mammary Paget's Disease (EMPD) are particularly suitable for treatment with Mohs Surgery. Others are better treated with Mapped Serial Excision, for example malignant Fibrous Histiocytoma (MHH), Dermatofibrosarcoma Protuberans (DFSP) and Leiomyosarcoma (LMS).

An extremely rare tumor, Merkel Cell carcinoma, (MCC) is increasing in incidence, and is particularly seen in immunosuppressed individuals and in the elderly. It is possibly the most malignant of all skin cancer with a marked tendency for early dissemination throughout the body. It is treated by excision, with subsequent radiotherapy. Interestingly, an oncogenic (cancer causing) virus has been identified as the likely cause of MCC. It is essential that these cancers be diagnosed early in order to achieve the highest chance of cure.

Further reading:

- Mohs Surgery
- Mapped Serial Excision
- Skin screening
- BCC
- SCC
- Melanoma