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DERMATOLOGICAL CONSULTATION AND SURGERY FOR SKIN CANCER DURING COVID19 PANDEMIC

These recommendations may serve as a guidance and are based on a general weighing of pros/cons. They need to be tuned according to the evolving situation and advices for COVID19 by the government and the weighing of the pros/cons for the individual patient.



INDICATIONS & DEGREE OF URGENCY



Urgent indications: need to come

- Referral for possible melanoma or other skin cancer
- Confirmed new melanoma
- Confirmed new SCC
- Confirmed new other skin cancer e.g. Merkel cell CA, angiosarcoma
- Excision suspicious nevus
- Follow-up stage II and III melanoma within first 2 years of follow-up
- Cutaneous lymphoma with systemic treatment
- Follow-up SCC: moderate/poor differentiation or prior metastasis or transplant patient or history of multiple SCCs
- Follow-up multiple melanomas
- Any patient with skin cancer history who is worried (first triage by teleconsultation)
- Planned digital dermoscopy follow-up of specific lesion(s) after 3-4 months



Semi-urgent indications:

can be postponed but need to be replanned urgently (within 8 max 12 weeks)

- Follow-up stage II and III melanoma after 2 years of follow-up
- Follow-up stage I melanoma and in situ melanoma
- Follow-up low-grade SCC
- Confirmed new BCC (for BCC in the face surgery should already be planned)
- Confirmed Morbus Bowen
- Follow-up multiple BCC
- Dysplastic nevus syndrome with family history of melanoma



Less urgent indications: can be postponed beyond 8-12 weeks

- Follow-up BCC
- Follow up dysplastic nevus syndrome with negative history of melanoma (annual check)
- Follow up actinic keratosis



PLANNING A CONSULTATION



- Contact the patient to reach consent on the need for a consultation - consider teleconsultation whenever possible

This is especially important in patients at risk for serious COVID19 infection (e.g. old age - immunosuppressive R/ - other comorbidities)

- Ask the patient:
 - if he/she has no fever – cough – flu-like symptoms
 - to bring a face mask if he/she has one



CONSULTATION

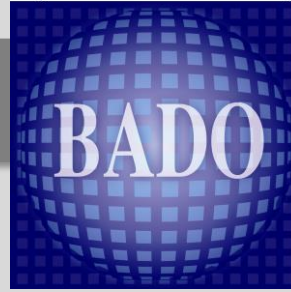


- Patients in the waiting area should be spaced at least 1.5 meter apart.
- Patient should clean their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Alternatively they can be asked to use alcohol disinfection
- If patients have a mouth mask (or the dermatology practice can provide one) they should be asked to wear it *
- Patients with fever - cough - flu-like symptoms in the past 4 weeks or patients who tested COVID19 positive should wear a mouth mask up to 30 days after the start of their first symptoms / positive testing.

* Wearing a face mask protects against spread of COVID19 by the carrier



- The dermatologist who performs total body examination with dermoscopy should wear a face mask and wash/sanitise hands. The dermatologist can consider to wear gloves during examination.
- The dermatoscope should be wiped with an alcohol wipe (70% isopropyl alcohol) for at least 1 minute before application on a patient. The use of a protective cap or polyvinyl chloride (PVC) food wrap on the dermatoscope should be considered.
- An alcohol solution or gel may be used as interface medium for dermoscopy as it simultaneously desinfects the skin parts that will be scoped.
- Dermoscopy at certain sites like hands, nails, face, eyes and mucosa should be avoided as much as possible.
- Paperless approach is encouraged.



SURGERY



1. Intervention outside head / neck area

Patient wears mask

Doctor wears mask and gloves and normal surgical clothing

2. Intervention head / neck area but not in mask area

Patient wears mask, sterile field protects as much as possible mask area

Doctor wears normal protective clothing (mask, gloves, surgical clothing)

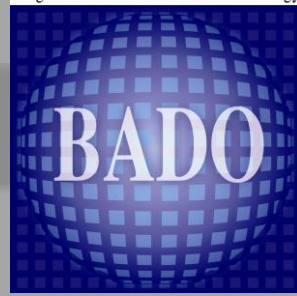
3. Intervention in mask area of the face

- Covid negative (SWAB screening day before): standard measures
- If testing is not available, consider positive and increase doctor's protection: (FFP2) mask plus extra protection (e.g. shield) and extra surgical apron over surgical clothing



REFERENCES

- <https://www.sciensano.be>
- DEEPAK JAKHAR, ISHMEET KAUR
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