

New Treatments for Skin Cancer

It's the word that frightens patients more than any other: cancer. This disease can present itself in many different variations, including potentially devastating skin cancer.

One of the most overwhelming aspects of being diagnosed with skin cancer, or any other cancer, is deciding what the right treatment course is. There are so many new treatments, it's not easy to know what to try or, for that matter, why you are deciding to try it.

Before being made available to the public, all new skin cancer treatments are tested for many years. Clinical trials must be conducted and, if these trials produce positive to excellent results, the new treatments will be used for the benefit of patients. In this manner, the medical system is able to offer up-to-date protection and treatment for those in need. Some new treatments are worth trying, and others are not. The important thing to remember is to only try something new under the careful watch of your health care provider. Don't take chances.

Retinoid

Some new treatments for skin cancer are showing success, even though they are still in the early stages of use. A chemical called Retinoid is one such treatment. This particular chemical has had some serious success when used as a treatment for non-melanoma skin cancers.

When used as a topical cream, Retinoid is applied generously to the tumor area. It works by helping the cancerous cells change back to being just normal cells. When using Retinoid cream, patients are discouraged from going out in the sun and should not donate blood. Expectant mothers should not use Retinoid cream, as there are concerns about possible birth defects.

Another form of Retinoid treatment is prescribed in pill form. It helps to prevent future occurrences of skin cancer in people who have had repeated bouts of the disease.

Like many skin cancer treatments, there are side effects to using Retinoid. During the first few days of using the cream, patients may experience redness or peeling skin in the tumor area, although this usually stops within a few days. Retinoids have shown good results in skin cancer patients, but there is still much to learn and some doctors are cautious about using it as a skin cancer treatment.

Imiquimod

Another new cream, still in the testing stages but showing positive results, is called Imiquimod. This medication is used to treat basal cell carcinoma, the most common form of skin cancer. It works by stimulating the body's immune system into fighting the cancerous cells and ultimately defeating them. This cream is still in the clinical testing stage, although it is expected that the trials will conclude with positive results.

Thalidomide

Among other treatment options, one is the controversial medication called Thalidomide. This former morning sickness medication had devastating effects on infants born to those women who used it. Nevertheless, Thalidomide has found its way back to the researchers table. Recent studies suggest good results when this medication is used to treat melanomas that have spread. When used in combination with other drugs, Thalidomide has shown some success.

Some new medications for skin cancer are effective, while others are not. It's a good idea to speak with other skin cancer patients to see if they have had success with alternative treatment methods. At any rate, discuss your intentions with your health care provider before venturing on your own healthcare course to try new treatments for skin cancer.