



APTA Oncology™

An Academy of the American
Physical Therapy Association

Student and New
Professional Subcommittee



Dx

Downloads:

Skin Cancer



Skin Cancer



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Melanoma

- **Common signs:** asymptomatic, pigmented lesion with atypical features
- **Patient reports with moderately advanced lesions:**
 - Bleeding
 - Crusting
 - Itching
 - Tenderness
 - Palpable lymph nodes

Squamous Cell Carcinoma (SCC)

- **Found on areas exposed to sun:** rim of ear, face, lips, mouth, dorsa of hands
- **Lesion Descriptors:**
 - Small, red, hard nodules with a smooth or warty surface
 - Scaly, ulcerated, or crusted central portion

Basal Cell Carcinoma (BCC)

- **Occurs on hair-bearing areas exposed to sun:** face, neck, head, ears, hands, trunk
- **Common forms of BCC:**
 - Pearly papule with small centered crater
 - Scaly, red, sharply outlined papule
 - Ill-defined pale, tough, scar-like tumor

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Treatments

- **Chemotherapy**
- **Radiation therapy**
- **Surgical resection**
- **Lymphadenectomy**

- **Deleterious effect on functional status and QOL**
- **Mortality decreased when lesions found and treated early**
- **Utilize ABCDE assessment screen**
 - Asymmetry
 - Border irregularity
 - Color Variation
 - Diameter > 6 mm
 - Evolving

Clinical Implications

Skin Cancer

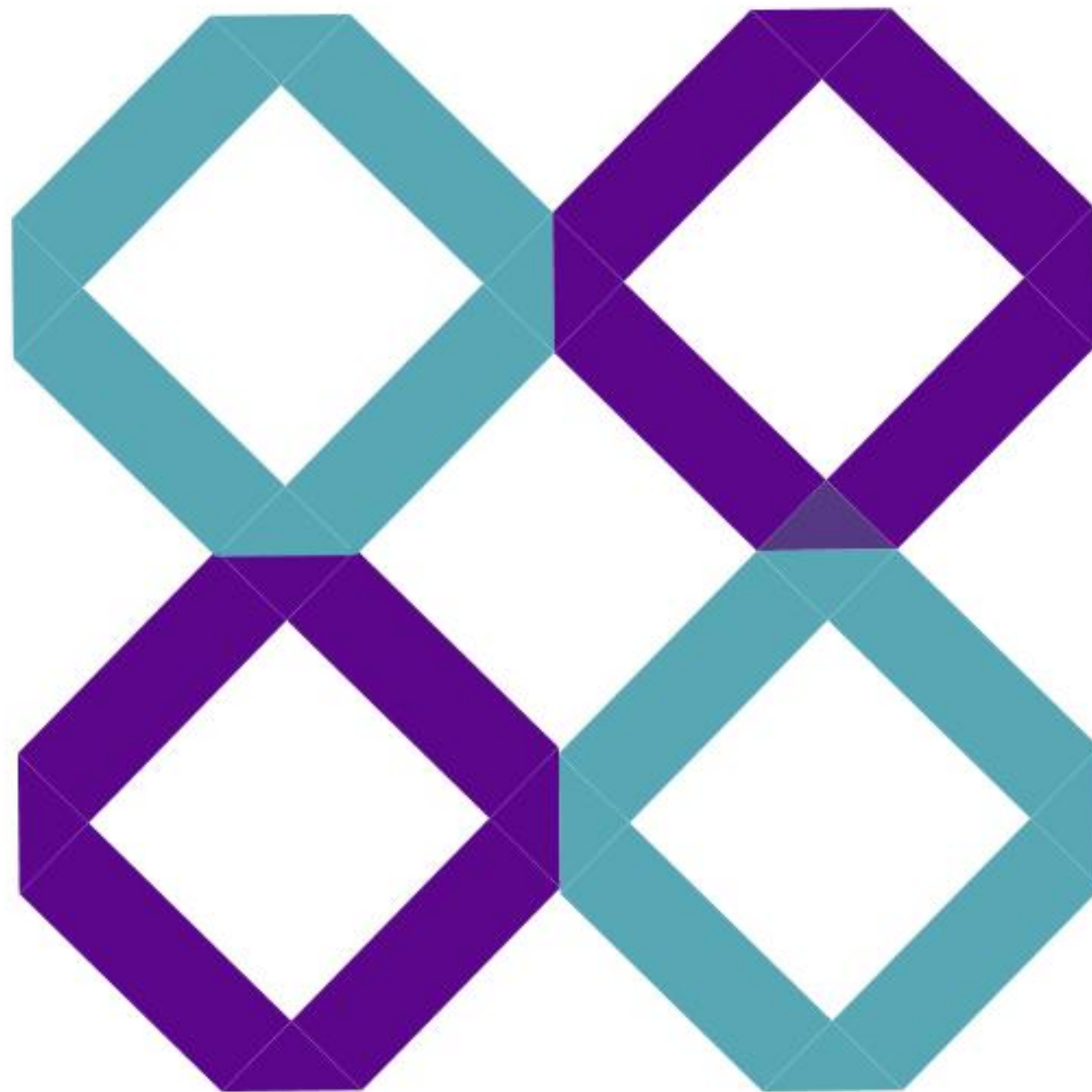


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Physical Therapist's Role

Assess

Perform risk factor assessment for suspected skin cancer



Screen

Screen integument and identify potential metastasis

Intervene

Treat impairments from oncological treatments and refer when appropriate

Educate

Resources for therapists and patients from the Skin Cancer Foundation



Takeaways

1

Physical Therapists can aid in the detection of suspicious lesions with screening tools and risk factor assessment

2

Regularly and systematically perform skin assessment with ABCDE criteria

3

Screening, detection, and referral of suspect lesions may help decrease associated morbidity and mortality

4

Investigate resources to help identify suspicious skin lesions and to provide education materials to patients

Resources

Stubblefield, MD. Cancer Rehabilitation 2E, Principles and Practice. Springer Publishing Company; 2018.

Wills, M. Skin Cancer Screening. Physical Therapy, Volume 82, Issue 12, 1 December 2002, Pages 1232-1237, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ptj/82.12.1232>.

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C. Goodman and T. Snyder. Differential Diagnosis for Physical Therapists: Screening and Referral, 5th edition. W.B. Saunders (Elsevier), 2013.

