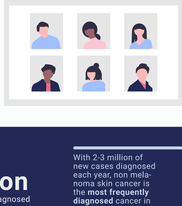
Why we need to build online communities

FOR ADVANCED NON-MELANOMA SKIN CANCER PATIENTS

#FacingTheSun



2-3 million

new cases diagnosed each year

With 2-3 million of new cases diagnosed each year, non melanoma skin cancer is the **most frequently diagnosed** cancer in the world.[1,2]

NMSC as an occupational disease

Five years of outdoor work can increase the **risk of developing NMSC** as much as three times.[3]

Outdoor workers often spend 75% of their **working hours in the sun**.[4]

Outdoor workers often lack **legislative protection** at both the national and European level.[5]

Despite ample evidence, many countries still **do not recognize** NMSC as an occupational disease.[6]

The WHO has classified exposure to ultraviolet radiation as **carcinogenic** to humans.[7,8]

Preventing and treating NMSC

Prevention measures[4,9,10]

- reduce sun exposure
- wear sun-protective clothing
- use sunscreen
- regular self-examination
- get regular check-ups
- talk to your doctor

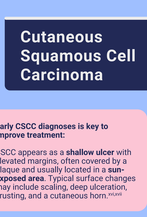
Prevention in the workplace

- adjust outdoor working hours
- seek shade whenever possible
- use shading structures for breaks

What can policy makers do?

- public education & awareness
- screening programs
- recognize NMSC as an occupational disease

Annual direct cost for the treatment of patients with advanced melanoma in Europe.[11]



What happens when you have NMSC?

Nearly 80% of NMSC cases involve **surgical removal** of the tumour.[4]

As NMSC **affects areas of skin on the head and neck**, surgery can have significant consequences for patients' appearance and self-esteem. [4]

Basal Cell Carcinoma

Basal Cell Carcinoma (BCC), the most common form of NMSC, accounts for 75% of all skin cancers.[4]

75%

Speak to your doctor at the first sign of BCC

BCCs often look like **open sores, red patches, pink growths, shiny bumps, scars or growths** with slightly elevated, rolled edges and/or a central indentation. At times, BCCs may ooze, crust, itch or bleed.[4,9]

Although advanced cases of BCC are uncommon, they can be **difficult to treat and potentially fatal** once metastases develop.[4]

Cutaneous Squamous Cell Carcinoma

Cutaneous Squamous Cell Carcinoma (CSCC) is the second most common form of NMSC.

While CSCC is rarely fatal, advanced CSCC has a **mortality rate** of over 70% and can – even after treatment – result in severe disfigurement and psychological distress.[4,12,13]

70%

Early CSCC diagnoses is key to improve treatment:

CSCC appears as a **shallow ulcer** with elevated margins, often covered by a plaque and usually located in a **sun-exposed area**. Typical surface changes may include scaling, deep ulceration, crusting, and a cutaneous horn.[4,12,13]

How online communities can help

Community support can help advanced NMSC patients find the kind of support and understanding they need.[4,10,13,14,15]

- Share difficult experiences
- emotional support
- Connect with others who understand

Online Community Support

Advanced NMSC affects a small population of patients. Online communities enable these patients to connect with each other and help them **feel less isolated**.

Online support groups help bring together people who live in **remote areas**, who do not have easy access to transportation.

It can also help people who **do not feel comfortable sharing** their experiences in person to communicate with others who have the same type of cancer.[16]

Online communities can enable patients to: [4,9,13,15]

- Share expertise
- Reduce personal fears
- Enhance research
- Facilitate advocacy activities

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European Cancer Patient Coalition

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