



DIFFUSE CONJUNCTIVAL
MELANOMA



NODULAR CONJUNCTIVAL
MELANOMA

Introduction

Conjunctival Melanoma is a form of ocular melanoma that grows on the surface of the eye.

Conjunctival melanoma

is very rare, representing only 1–2% of all ocular melanomas with only 15–20 patients each year developing this cancer in the UK.

Symptoms

Conjunctival melanoma may not cause any symptoms. Patients may seek medical advice because they notice a discolouration on the eye or see the tumour on the cornea. It can also be discovered through a routine eye examination.

Referral

On discovering or suspecting a tumour, optometrists or GPs should immediately refer directly to the local ophthalmology department, usually through an emergency eye clinic.

If an ophthalmologist suspects conjunctival melanoma, they must make a referral within 48 hours to one of four supra-regional centres; Glasgow (Tennent Institute), Liverpool (RLBUHT), London (St Barts and the London), Sheffield (Hallamshire).

Patients must be seen within two weeks.



Further reading

-  [Royal College of Ophthalmologists: Referral Guidelines for adult ocular tumours](#)
-  [The Liverpool Ocular Oncology Centre: A Guide For Practitioners](#)



Treatment

The four supra-regional centres offer a variety of treatments for removing or destroying conjunctival melanoma, including plaque radiotherapy, surgical excision, topical

chemotherapy and cryotherapy. Treatments may be given in combination.

Beyond the Eye

Conjunctival melanomas can spread through the blood stream. Common sites of metastases include the lung, liver, brain and bone. Biopsy of the primary tumour may be used to gather more information, as chances of metastatic disease correlate with the clinical stage, the histological grade of malignancy and the genetic type.

Conjunctival melanoma can also scatter tumour cells to glands in the cheek and neck, where new tumours may develop. Sentinel node biopsy can be performed to assess the extent of any spread. TNM staging is used and can be found on www.pathologyoutlines.com.

From a genetic standpoint, conjunctival melanoma has more in common with cutaneous melanoma than uveal melanoma, for example, the BRAF mutation may be present. This may allow conjunctival melanoma patients to participate in cutaneous melanoma trials.

About Us

OcuMel UK aims to provide information and support to anyone affected by ocular melanoma who would be otherwise isolated. We also provide information to GPs.

We can be contacted via our helpline on 0300 790 0512 or email info@ocumeluk.org.



CB1271