
This version is available at http://eprints.hud.ac.uk/14582/

The University Repository is a digital collection of the research output of the University, available on Open Access. Copyright and Moral Rights for the items on this site are retained by the individual author and/or other copyright owners. Users may access full items free of charge; copies of full text items generally can be reproduced, displayed or performed and given to third parties in any format or medium for personal research or study, educational or not-for-profit purposes without prior permission or charge, provided:

- The authors, title and full bibliographic details is credited in any copy;
- A hyperlink and/or URL is included for the original metadata page; and
- The content is not changed in any way.

For more information, including our policy and submission procedure, please contact the Repository Team at: E.mailbox@hud.ac.uk.

http://eprints.hud.ac.uk/
The Psychological Impact of Facial Skin Cancer

J Caddick
J Stephenson
L Green
G Spyrou
Pinderfields General Hospital, Wakefield
Non-melanoma skin cancers are generally considered to have a low mortality & little impact on quality of life (QoL).

80% of non-melanoma skin cancers occur in the head and neck → Thus both the skin cancer and the scars following surgical excision are conspicuously placed in a cosmetically sensitive area.

- Facial disfigurement results in anxiety, depression and social isolation
- The severity of this often bears little relationship to the magnitude of the defect itself.
Study Aims & Design

• This study was designed to quantify the social, emotional and aesthetic impact of facial skin cancers on patients before and after surgical excision.
• 53 patients were prospectively recruited
• Patients were assessed before and three months after surgery using the Skin Cancer Index (SCI)*.
• This is a 15 item, disease-specific, quality of life assessment tool which measures three distinct subscales: emotion, social and appearance.
• Higher scores reflect an improvement in QoL.

Surgical excision led to a significant improvement in both the total SCI score (from 70.0 to 82.4, p < 0.001) and in each of the individual sub-scale scores.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skin Cancer Index</th>
<th>Pre-surgery mean SCI (SD)</th>
<th>Post-surgery mean SCI (SD)</th>
<th>Change in mean SCI (SD)</th>
<th>p value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total SCI score</td>
<td>70.0 (25.3)</td>
<td>82.4 (18.4)</td>
<td>12.4 (17.4)</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional score</td>
<td>66.6 (27.1)</td>
<td>77.6 (20.0)</td>
<td>11.0 (17.6)</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social score</td>
<td>75.5 (28.3)</td>
<td>85.7 (23.1)</td>
<td>10.2 (26.3)</td>
<td>0.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appearance score</td>
<td>68.7 (34.3)</td>
<td>85.2 (23.1)</td>
<td>16.5 (27.7)</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• SCI scores in patients with **SCCs** improved over 3 times more than those in patients with BCCs \( (p=0.016) \)

• Age, gender, scar length & method of wound closure did not have a significant impact on change in overall SCI score.

• Increasing age correlated with a greater improvement in SCI following surgery.

• **Women** showed a greater improvement than men in the **appearance & emotional** subscales.

• **Men** improved more in the **social** subscale.
Conclusions

• Surgical excision improves social, emotional & cosmetic wellbeing in patients with cutaneous facial malignancies
• This improvement is most evident in patients with SCCs
• Female & younger patients are most vulnerable to quality of life anxieties pre-operatively