



ECCRINE POROCARCINOMA

What are the aims of this leaflet?

This information leaflet has been produced to help you understand more about eccrine porocarcinoma. It explains what it is, how it is diagnosed, what causes it, how it is treated, and where you can find out more about it.

What is eccrine porocarcinoma?

Eccrine porocarcinoma is a rare type of skin cancer involving a type of sweat gland called the eccrine glands. Eccrine sweat glands are present in the skin, with the highest density on the palms, soles, face and scalp.

Eccrine porocarcinoma is typically a slow-growing tumour which is more common in those who are over 60 years of age, and occurs equally in men and women. It can sometimes spread to internal organs in the body.

What causes eccrine porocarcinoma?

The cause is unknown.

It has been suggested that being immunosuppressed (having an illness or medicine causing less strong defences against some infections and cancers) might increase the risk of developing eccrine porocarcinoma

Is eccrine porocarcinoma hereditary?

No. There is currently no evidence to suggest this.

What does eccrine porocarcinoma look like?

It may appear as a dome-shaped nodule or lump within the skin and has a moist and shiny surface. It is usually described as pink or red in colour.

Eccrine porocarcinoma most commonly occurs on the legs, but may also occur on the body, head and neck.

What are the symptoms of eccrine porocarcinoma?

Eccrine porocarcinoma often does not cause symptoms; however bleeding, itching or pain can sometimes occur.

How is eccrine porocarcinoma diagnosed?

Eccrine porocarcinoma is a rare cancer and so can sometimes be difficult to diagnose. Diagnosis is usually made with a skin biopsy of the affected area where a small sample of tissue is taken so that it can be examined under a microscope. The pathologist who examines this sample will look for the characteristic features of eccrine porocarcinoma.

Can eccrine porocarcinoma be cured?

The cure rate is 70-80% if the eccrine porocarcinoma is diagnosed early and completely surgically removed.

How can eccrine porocarcinoma be treated?

Treatment is usually with surgical removal under local anaesthetic. Some patients may be referred for Mohs' micrographic surgery which is a highly specialised surgical method for removing skin cancer.

In the 20% - 30% of patients where the tumour has spread to other organs in the body, treatments such as radiotherapy and chemotherapy may be considered.

Self care (What can I do?)

- Check your skin regularly for the appearance of a pink lump with a shiny and moist surface, especially on your legs. See your GP if you find such a lump.
- See your GP if you notice a change in a patch or lesion that you have ~~had or have~~ **always** had for a long time. Examples of change include bleeding, ulceration, or if a skin lesion rapidly grows bigger.
- If you have had an eccrine porocarcinoma removed you should check the site regularly for any signs of recurrence as it can recur at the same site

Where can I get more information about eccrine porocarcinoma?

Page 2 of 3

Web link to detailed leaflet:

www.dermnetnz.org/lesions/eccrine-porocarcinoma.html

For details of source materials used please contact the Clinical Standards Unit (clinicalstandards@bad.org.uk).

This leaflet aims to provide accurate information about the subject and is a consensus of the views held by representatives of the British Association of Dermatologists: individual patient circumstances may differ, which might alter both the advice and course of therapy given to you by your doctor.

This leaflet has been assessed for readability by the British Association of Dermatologists' Patient Information Lay Review Panel

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