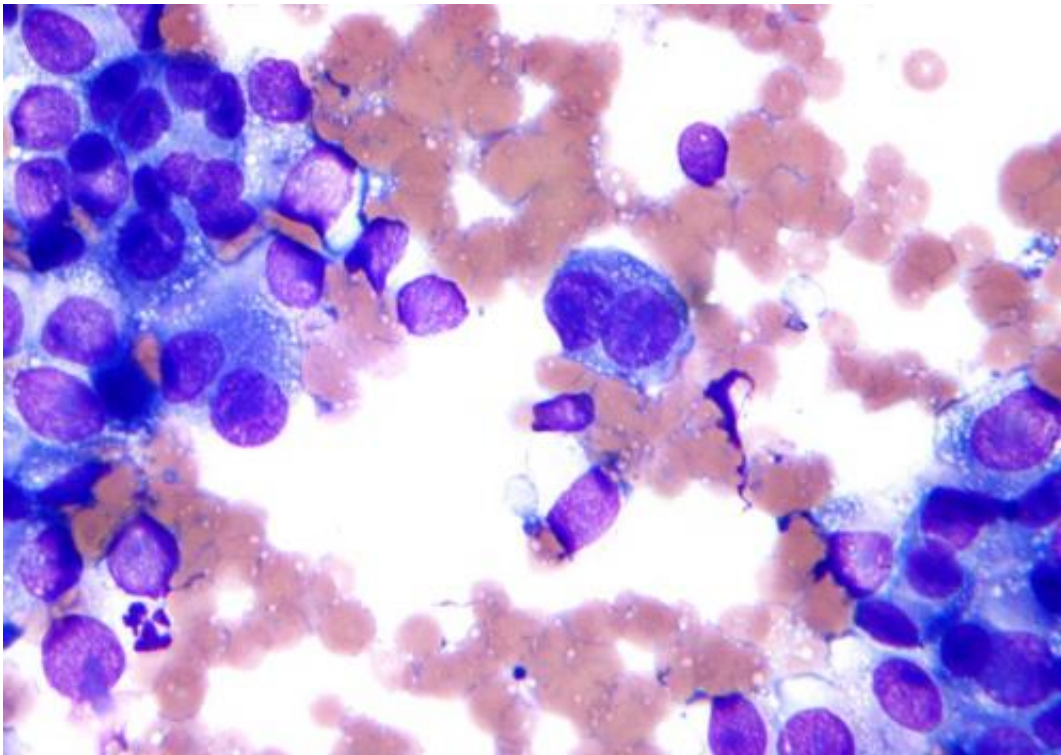


Interest in learning about skin cancer appears to increase during summer

June 10 2015



Micrograph of malignant melanoma. Cytology specimen. Field stain. Credit: Nephron/Wikipedia

Google searches for information on melanoma and skin cancer increased over the summer months during a five-year period, although the level of interest did not correlate with the melanoma mortality to incidence ratio, suggesting that increased search volumes may not be associated with early detection, according to a research letter published online by *JAMA*

Dermatology.

Researcher Kyle T. Amber, M.D., of MacNeal Hospital, Berwyn, Ill., and coauthors used Google Trends, a research tool which quantifies interest in topics at the population level by analyzing all search queries for a specific term, to extract data for each state from 2010 to 2014 for the terms "skin cancer" and "melanoma." Search volume indexes (SVIs) are values based on total searches during a specified period per selected region.

The authors found that while Google searches increased during the summer, they remained stable for five years from 2010 to 2014. Searches for melanoma mirrored the volume for skin cancer and the researchers found a correlation between skin cancer SVI for all states and melanoma mortality but no significant correlation between SVI and melanoma incidence, which is a measure of new cases, according to the results. At the individual state level, the 2010 SVI data for the terms "skin cancer" and "melanoma" did not significantly correlate with melanoma incidence and mortality. Nevada was the top state by SVI for skin cancer searches and Pennsylvania was the top state by SVI for [melanoma](#) searches, according to the results.

"Our study found an increase in the general populations' interest in learning about skin cancer during the [summer months](#). ... Because the U.S. population seeks information regarding [skin cancer](#) at a greater level during the summer months, this might be the most efficient time for educational and public health initiatives," the study concludes.

More information: *JAMA Dermatology*. Published online June 10, 2015. [DOI: 10.1001/jamadermatol.2015.1216](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamadermatol.2015.1216)

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