

# Instrument assesses competency in detecting melanoma

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(HealthDay)—The Skin Cancer Objective Structured Clinical Examination is a well-developed instrument that can assess medical student competency in detecting melanoma, according to research published in the December issue of the *Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology*.

In an effort to develop an objective structured [clinical examination](#) for the detection and assessment of melanoma, Amit Garg, M.D., from Hofstra North Shore-LIJ School of Medicine in Hempstead, N.Y., and colleagues conducted a prospective cohort analysis of medical students. The authors examined agreement on performance of clinical [skills](#) and assessed differences in performance across three schools.

The researchers observed excellent agreement for three of the five core

skills, including commenting on the presence of the moulage, obtaining a history of the moulage, and making a clinical impression ( $k = 0.87, 0.84,$  and  $0.80,$  respectively). With respect to three of the five skills, there were no differences in performance across schools: commenting on the presence of the moulage ( $P = 0.15$ ), initiating a history ( $P = 0.53$ ), and managing the suspicious lesion ( $P$  value range =  $0.7$  to  $0.17$ ). Overall,  $54.2$  percent of students commented on the presence of the moulage and  $44.7$  percent achieved maximum performance of core skills; no difference in performance was seen across schools.

"The Skin Cancer Objective Structured Clinical Examination represents a potentially important instrument to measure students' performance on the optimal step-by-step evaluation of a melanoma," the authors write.

**More information:** [Abstract](#)

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