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Slow-growing melanomas lose structure, vary color with time

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The diameter of most slow-growing melanomas changes very little over time, but the lesions can become more disorganized, less structured, and change or develop new colors, according to a study published in the June issue of the *British Journal of Dermatology*.

(HealthDay) -- The diameter of most slow-growing melanomas (SGMs) changes very little over time, but the lesions can become more disorganized, less structured, and change or develop new colors, according to a study published in the June issue of the *British Journal of Dermatology*.

Vitaly Terushkin, M.D., of Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York City, and colleagues retrospectively assessed a dermoscopic image dataset of 92 SGMs from 15 pigmented lesion clinics that were sequentially followed for one year or more. Changes in global pattern, organization, color, structure, and size were evaluated at baseline and follow-up.

The researchers found that, on follow-up, the dermoscopic pattern of the melanomas became more homogeneous and less reticular; the melanomas had more frequent disorganization of pattern; there was a reduction in the prominence of dermoscopic structure of pigmented network and a simultaneous increase in the prominence of areas with no structure; and they developed more melanoma-specific dermoscopic structures. Color changes included a decrease in light brown and increases in the prominence of dark brown and the frequency of new colors (red, white, grey, blue, and black). Seventy-five percent of lesions grew by less than 2 mm or remained the same size; an increase in size correlated with the total number of colors and structures.

"Physicians should pay particular attention to melanocytic lesions that, over time, become more disorganized, reveal a loss of network in favor of structureless areas, develop a negative network, and exhibit new colors such as dark brown, black, grey, blue, red, and white; in addition, one should not rely solely on change in size," the authors write.

More information: Abstract
Full Text (subscription or payment may be required)

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