

## The Rising Incidence of Melanoma and Nonmelanoma Skin Cancer Obliges Us to Persevere With Primary and Secondary Prevention Campaigns<sup>☆</sup>



### El incremento en la incidencia del melanoma y en cáncer cutáneo no melanoma nos obliga a insistir en las campañas de prevención primarias y secundarias

The current issue of *ACTAS DERMOSIFILIOGRÁFICAS* includes an excellent review by Martín García et al. on changes in the incidence of skin and lip cancer in recent decades.<sup>1</sup> The incidence of both melanoma and nonmelanoma skin cancer has been growing since the end of the last century and they are now the most common malignancies in certain population groups (younger people with a light-skinned phototype). Fortunately, despite the increased incidence of melanoma, the associated mortality rate has remained stable or has even declined.<sup>2</sup> It is very possible that improvements in medical care are responsible for this encouraging stabilization of the mortality rate. However, the continuing rise in the incidence of these cancers highlights the need to review and persist with primary prevention campaigns. The increase has been attributed to a mix of different factors: greater exposure to sunlight, especially intermittent episodes of intense exposure; increased life expectancy; lifestyle changes (clothing, outdoor leisure activities, etc.); and the growing immunosuppressed population.<sup>3</sup>

While the population with chronic occupational sun exposure has been reduced significantly as a result of industrial

development, the incidence of squamous cell carcinoma has not decreased, possibly because of the emergence of other risk factors, including the growing popularity of outdoor leisure activities and the increase in the population of immunocompromised patients.<sup>3</sup> Intense exposures to solar UV radiation at a young age appear to be one of the causes of basal cell carcinoma. This means that, until we start to see the results of the primary prevention campaigns now targeting the school-age population in our country, we should expect an increase in the incidence of this malignancy for some years.<sup>2</sup> Since intermittent intense exposure to solar UV increases the risk of melanoma, it is essential to continue the primary prevention campaigns and also to promote secondary prevention programs to ensure early detection of the disease.

### References

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O. Sanmartín Jimenez

*Servicio de Dermatología, Instituto Valenciano de Oncología, Valencia, Spain*

*E-mail address: osanmartinj@gmail.com*

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