HIV Raises Melanoma Risk

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People living with HIV are at increased risk of melanoma irrespective of antiretroviral (ARV) use, especially if they are white skinned, aidsmap reports. Publishing their findings in PLOS ONE, researchers conducted a systematic review and meta-analysis of 21 studies done between 1999 and 2013, comparing the link between HIV and the relative risk of melanoma in the eras both before and after the advent of ARV cocktails in 1996.

The median follow-up period in the studies ranged between two and 10 years. Eight of the studies concerned the pre-1996 era and 13 the modern ARV era.

HIV was associated with a 26 percent increased risk for melanoma in both the pre- and post-1996 eras. When accounting just for those who were white skinned, this increased risk jumped to 50 percent in the post-1996 era. That figure was 28 percent for the pre-1996 era. The increased risk of melanoma was statistically significant for white-skinned people with HIV, meaning it is unlikely to be the result chance; for other people with HIV, the finding is of borderline significance.

The researchers concluded that HIV-positive people with white skin should receive regular screening for potentially malignant skin lesions and should receive warnings about the dangers of extended sun exposure.

To read the aidsmap story, click here.

To read the study, click here.

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