



People With HIV Have a Doubled Risk of Non-Melanoma Skin Cancers

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The incidence of two non-melanoma skin cancers—basal cell and squamous cell carcinomas—is more than twice as high among people with HIV as compared with the general population, according to study findings published in the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute* and reported by Kaiser Permanente, which conducted the research. The study included a cohort of 6,560 HIV-positive and nearly 37,000 HIV-negative members of Kaiser Permanente Northern California between 1996 and 2008.

The study, which is the first to identify with such specificity the nature of this increased skin cancer risk, found that the HIV-positive participants' rate of basal cell carcinomas was 2.1 times higher than those without HIV, and their risk of squamous cell carcinomas 2.6 times greater. The researchers also found that squamous cell carcinomas were associated with lowered CD4 counts. The study's authors note these findings fall in line with HIV-positive people's increased risk for a wide variety of cancers, which is likely a consequence of damage to the immune system.

In press materials, senior author Maryam M. Asgari, MD, MPH, a Kaiser Permanente dermatologist and investigator at its Division of Research, called for "increased vigilance in skin-cancer screening for HIV-positive individuals" for these common and typically curable cancers, "particularly for those who are not on antiretroviral therapy or who were diagnosed late and have more advanced HIV/AIDS."

To read the Kaiser Permanente release, [click here](#).

For the study abstract, [click here](#).

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