Public Prefers Dermatologists to Treat Skin Cancer: Study

When it comes to evaluating and treating skin cancer, the public overwhelmingly prefers dermatologists over other health care providers, says a just-published study in Dermatologic Surgery.

Rolling Meadows, IL (PRWEB) July 22, 2014 -- Dermatologists are overwhelmingly the preferred health care provider for evaluating and treating skin cancer, according to a study published in the June issue of Dermatologic Surgery.

The journal is the official publication for American Society for Dermatologic Surgery, the largest organization exclusively representing dermatologic surgeons who are leaders in medically necessary and cosmetic skin surgery.

Respondents to an online survey were asked their choice for evaluating a worrisome lesion on the face and for removing skin cancers from the back and face. The options were a dermatologist, primary care physician, plastic surgeon, general surgeon or a physician assistant/nurse practitioner.

For specific treatments, respondents prefer the following providers:

- Removing cancer from the back: dermatologist, 73 percent; general surgeon, 14.7 percent
- Evaluation: dermatologist, 70 percent; primary care physician, 23.4 percent
- Removing a cancer from the face: dermatologist, nearly 63 percent; plastic surgeon, 23 percent

The study’s co-authors said they wanted to know the perceptions of the general public when it comes to treating skin cancer because of lack of consistent requirements in some states and the increasing numbers both of treatments and of non-physician providers.

Medical professionals may consider a dermatologist the obvious choice, said ASDS member Omar A. Ibrahimi, M.D., Ph.D, one of the study’s co-authors. “However, it is not clear that the lay public fully understands the varying roles of specialists when it comes to disease and disease prevention,” he said.

The survey shows the public understands dermatologists are the experts in skin health and beauty, he said. With dermatology taking on a more surgical orientation in recent years, the general public also knows dermatologists are the physicians of choice when it comes to removing skin cancers from the face, he said.

“Certainly, Mohs surgery has been established as the gold standard to treat facial basal and squamous cell carcinomas,” he said.

The survey did not ask for the reasons for preference, which Ibrahimi said could be explored in a future study. Further research can help physicians know more about the views of the public when it comes to procedures involving the skin, perhaps helping increase patient satisfaction, study authors said.

About the ASDS
The American Society for Dermatologic Surgery (ASDS) is the largest specialty organization exclusively representing dermatologic surgeons who have unique training and experience to treat the health, function and beauty of your skin. ASDS members are pioneers in the field. Many are involved in the clinical studies that bring popular treatments to revitalize skin and fill and diminish wrinkles to the forefront. Their work has helped create and enhance many of the devices that remove blemishes, hair and fat, and tighten skin. Dermatologic surgeons also are experts in skin cancer prevention, detection and treatment. As the incidence of skin cancer rises, dermatologic surgeons are committed to taking steps to minimize the life-threatening effects of this disease. For more information, visit asds.net.

Website: www.asds.net
Follow ASDS on Twitter: www.twitter.com/SkinCancerinfo
Become a fan of ASDS on Facebook: www.facebook.com/SkinCancerAwareness
Locate a dermatologic surgeon in your area: www.asds.net/findadermatologist.aspx

Contact:
Beth Bales, Communications Manager
American Society for Dermatologic Surgery
847-956-9143
Contact Information
Beth Bales
American Society for Dermatologic Surgery
http://www.asds.net
+1 847-956-9143

Online Web 2.0 Version
You can read the online version of this press release here.