

# Personalized Medicine in the Office: How Dermatologists are Using the Latest in Genetic Technology to Treat Skin Cancer

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, March 9, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Every year 200,000 Americans are diagnosed with a type of skin cancer called melanoma. These dark skin spots may appear harmless, and if they are caught early they can be easily cut out by a dermatologist. However, even the slightest delay can let the melanoma grow and spread to the lymph nodes,

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*Justin W. Marson, MD*

lungs, and brain. As melanomas spread, treating it requires more intense medical therapy and carries worse outcomes. Advances in our understanding of cancer genetics have led to the creation of gene expression profile (GEP) tests that can assist dermatologists in determining which melanomas need more urgent and aggressive treatment. According to a recent study published in SKIN, the Journal of Cutaneous Medicine, these tests, including a test that uses 31 different genes to evaluate these

melanomas, are increasingly being used by dermatologists across the nation.

Justin W. Marson, MD and co-authors as part of the Skin Cancer Prevention Working Group conducted a survey during two national dermatology conferences to find out how this 31-GEP test was being used by dermatologists in the office when making treatment plans for and counseling their patients with melanoma. The study authors had over 500 dermatologists answer 18 questions about how they used the 31-GEP test.

Over 70% of dermatologists reported that they felt the test increased their knowledge and understanding and nearly 60% also reported the test helped them personalize treatment options and ease patient’s uncertainty about the future. The authors also found that a material majority of dermatologists would recommend the test if any of their family or friends were diagnosed with melanoma (66%) or to a patient or colleague (81.8%). According to Dr. Marson, “Our study showed that a majority of dermatologists trust the results of this genetic test and are using it to inform how they care for patients with melanoma.”

Although the “ABCDE” criteria (Asymmetry, Border irregularity, Color inconsistencies, Diameter larger than 6mm, and Evolution) continue to be the foundations of spotting melanoma early, new advances in genetic tests and personalized medicine are already changing how physicians

care for patients. Dr. Marson and colleagues note that as the 31-GEP continues to be incorporated into standard care practices, more patients may benefit from more personalized treatment options and peace of mind.

For more information about the Skin Cancer Prevention Working Group, please visit <https://www.dsr.foundation/skincancer>

SKIN: The Journal of Cutaneous Medicine® is a peer-reviewed online medical journal that is the official journal of The National Society for Cutaneous Medicine. The mission of SKIN is to provide an enhanced and accelerated route to disseminate new dermatologic knowledge for all aspects of cutaneous disease.

For more details please visit [www.jofskin.org](http://www.jofskin.org) or contact [jofskin@gmail.com](mailto:jofskin@gmail.com).

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