

Educational Case: Invasive Melanoma

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Diagnosing Invasive Melanoma can be challenging with the various subtypes and benign mimics. Many pitfalls in obtaining biopsies and pathology evaluation can occur that can obscure the definitive answer. Melanoma progression is on a spectrum from superficial spreading types to vertical growth phases such as nodular melanoma. To address these concerns, we developed a continuing medical education piece for medical students and pathology residents describing the clinical presentations of melanoma and common benign conditions (such as lentiginosis, seborrheic keratosis, keloid scars, etc) and the various benign and malignant pathologic differential diagnosis (spritz nevus, atypical melanocytic nevus, irritated nevus, superficial spreading melanoma, and lentigo maligna melanoma, etc) that should be considered with a possible case of invasive melanoma. Articles for the continuing medical education piece were found using Google scholar and PubMed. These papers were inspected for relevant research studies relating to the clinical presentation, clinical differential diagnosis, pathologic diagnosis, pathologic differential and various diagnostic tools used to confirm a melanoma diagnosis. 145 articles and texts related to melanoma diagnosis and differential were reviewed and incorporated into this work. Four malignant melanoma subtypes and six benign lesions that were pathologically similar to invasive melanoma are described. Additionally, common pitfalls are discussed and explored.