

## Multiple Linear Basal Cell Carcinomas

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### Abstract

Basal cell carcinoma is the most frequent cancer in humans and usually presents as a single lesion, mainly on the face and neck. We report a particular case of non-syndromic multiple linear basal cell carcinomas of unusual localisation, associated with a contiguous giant basal cell carcinoma.

**Keywords:** Basal cell carcinoma; Linear; Oncodermatology; Dermoscopy

### 1. Case Report

An 82-year-old female patient with Fitzpatrick skin type III presented to our department with a tumor of the face evolving since 20 years. She had no other medical history. An examination revealed a giant ulcerated and protruded tumor on the forehead measuring 8 cm × 6.5 cm, with hard and pigmented edges. The tumor bled easily and was very painful. We noted multiple other lesions on the face. There was another tumor on the forehead measuring 2 cm x 3 cm with pigmented edges and ulcerated center, and multiple linear pigmented lesions on the cheeks, and temporal and mandibular region. On dermoscopy the lesions presented ovoid nests, maple leaf-like structures, scales, ulceration and arborizing vessels, highly suggestive of basal cell carcinomas. The remainder of the physical examination was without abnormalities. There was no family history of skin cancer or genodermatosis, nor a past history of tumor/cysts or radiotherapy or exposure to chemical substances. Histopathological examination confirmed the diagnosis of basal cell carcinoma, of infiltrative subtype. The patient was referred to the plastic surgery department but was lost to follow-up.

### 2. Discussion

Basal cell carcinoma is the most frequent cancer in humans and usually presents as a single lesion, mainly on the face and neck [1]. If neglected by the patient, it can reach a huge size as we noted in our observation. Multiple localisations are not rare, as there is a higher risk of getting other basal cell carcinomas after the initial lesion in the following 5 years [1] (FIG.1).



**FIG. 1. Two tumors of the forehead: a giant ulcerated and protruded tumor with hard and pigmented edges, and a crusted tumor with pigmented edges and ulcerated center. We note a linear pigmented lesion on the right sub-palpebral region.**

Linear basal cell carcinoma is a very unusual morphological variant of basal cell carcinoma. It is defined as a basal cell carcinoma that grows in a linear pattern, with a longitudinal diameter longer than its width. 67 cases have been published since 1985 [2]. Of these, 36 were women and 31 were men, with a median age of 70 years [2]. The most affected sites were the periocular region and the neck [2]. Histologically, most of the cases were of the nodular type followed by the infiltration subtype [2], as reported in our case (FIG.2).

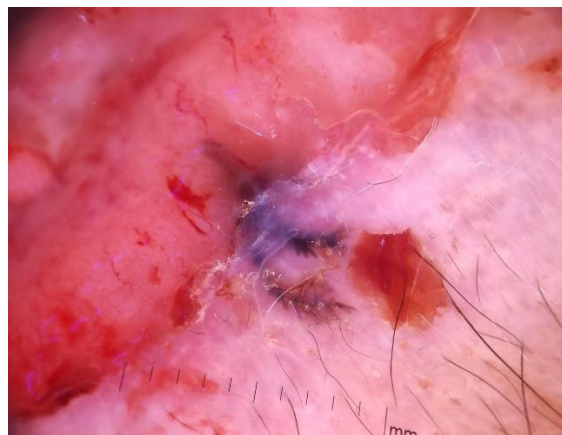


**FIG. 2. Multiple linear pigmented lesions on the cheeks, temporal and mandibular region.**

The majority of the cases described as linear tumors were aligned along the tension lines of the relaxed skin [3]. It has been proposed that tumor linearity is partly related to the stromal influences on the tension lines of the relaxed skin, combined with contraction of the muscles which constrain the growth in a single orientation [3]. We report a particular case of non-syndromic multiple linear basal cell carcinomas of unusual localisation, associated with a contiguous giant basal cell carcinoma (FIG.3 & 4).



**FIG. 3. Dermoscopy of a linear basal cell carcinoma: multiple maple leaf structures, scales, arborizing vessels.**



**FIG. 4. Dermoscopy of the periphery of the giant tumor: ovoid nests, maple leaf-like structure, ulceration and arborizing vessels.**

### **3. Conflicts Of Interest**

None disclosed.

### **4. Funds**

none disclosed.

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