

THE « SOLMOBILE » SWISS MELANOMA PREVENTION CAMPAIGNS (2001-05)

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BACKGROUND:

Switzerland has one of the highest incidence rates of melanoma in Europe and has been one of the pioneer European countries to launch early detection and educational campaigns for melanoma some 20 years ago. Between 2001 and 2005, the Swiss Cancer League, the Swiss Society for Dermatology and Venereology, and the Swiss Office of Public Health jointly ran the “SolMobile” campaigns. The aims of the campaigns were (1) to inform people on their skin type and risks of sun (over)exposure, (2) to assess one’s risk of skin cancer, and (3) to offer a free clinical dermatological examination for suspicious skin lesions.

OBJECTIVES:

To evaluate the socio-demographical and epidemiological profile of participants to the “SolMobile” campaigns, their motivations and cutaneous screening behaviour. The selectivity of participants for an immediate clinical examination and the yielding of these examinations were also assessed.

METHODS:

During spring and summertime, a mobile unit (“SolMobile”) travelled through Switzerland according to a predefined and publicised schedule. In each town, visitors in the bus filled an anonymous questionnaire on their melanoma risk factors, screening habits and reasons for participation. The evolution of suspicious lesions was documented (according to the ABCD rules). Data on the clinical diagnosis made by the dermatologist in the bus were separately recorded and later matched for analysis to the questionnaire data. Both professional and public places were targeted.

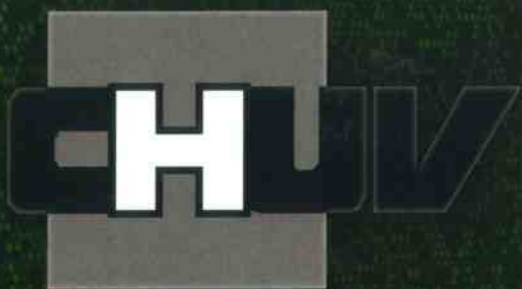
RESULTS:

Between 2001 and 2005, some 21’000 visits and 10’000 clinical examinations were recorded. The mean age of visitors was 43 years with a predominance of women (57%), regardless of linguistic region. For 25% of visits which occurred on work places (firms, hospitals, universities), participants were younger than on public places with an equal sex distribution. The main reasons for participation changed over time (showing a suspicious lesion in 2003, publicity and curiosity in 2004 and 2005), with age and places (public vs work), but concurred for both sexes. One third of visitors had a yearly skin check mostly performed by a dermatologist (80%). Four visitors in 10 presented an elevated risk of melanoma: having more than 50 pigmented moles (51%), a sun-sensitive skin (45% of skin type I or II) and serious sunburns during childhood (39%) were the most prevalent risk factors.

Clinical examinations were more often performed among at-risk visitors and those reporting more regular skin checks. The campaigns identified 358 suspicious lesions (57 melanomas, 39 lentigo maligna, 249 basal and 13 squamous cell carcinomas) or 17 per 1’000 visits (35 per 1’000 examinations).

CONCLUSION:

The “SolMobile” campaigns met both its primary and secondary prevention objectives. While the suspicion rate of the campaigns was stable over the years, the selectivity of at-risk visitors for a clinical examination improved over time. Recommendations based on this experience are suggested for future skin cancer campaigns.



Research Day

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César Roux Auditorium

Genes *and* **Diseases**

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Couverture : Yannick Krempp, Département de Biologie Cellulaire et de Morphologie – UNIL

Photo : DNA microarray image of an RNA expression profiling experiment provided by
Manuela Weier and Henrik Kaessmann of the Centre Intégréatif de Génomique - CIG
and Jérôme Thomas of the Lausanne DNA Array Facility, Centre Intégréatif de Génomique - CIG



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