

SKIN CANCER SCREENING AT THE WORKPLACE OF A LARGE TRADING COMPANY

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Introduction

Skin cancer screening was introduced in north-western Germany by public health institutions in 1995. Within the following years company-owned health insurances (Betriebskrankenkassen) started this service for their members. They recognized the benefit of early skin cancer diagnosis and encouraged local dermatologists to screen their employees. This service was offered in part at the workplace as a convenient and time-saving employee benefit.

Methods

Würth, one of the world's leading trading companies for screws and tools, has provided costfree skin cancer screening at its headquarter in Künzelsau and its logistic centre in Bad Mergentheim once or twice yearly since 2005. The employees were invited by advertizing the event on notice boards, by e-mail, and by staff announcements. The schedule was organized as 10-minute-intervals by Würth. Examinations included a clinical inspection of the total skin area using a magnifying light source and a dermoscope. Methods of sun protection were discussed. Suspicious lesions were excised subsequently and examined histologically.

Outcomes

Between 2005 and 2015 2.486 employees (58% female, 42% male) were screened. During this period the number of detected early skin cancers and their precursors increased continuously by self-selection due to the increasing level of education of the participants who recognized their risk factors. Overall, 5 (0.2%) melanomas, 5 (0.2 %) melanomas in situ, 84 (3.4 %) dysplastic nevi, 9 (0.4 %) basal cell carcinomas, 6 (0.2 %) squamous cell carcinomas, and 42 (1.7%) actinic keratoses were detected. These data correspond to the incidence among the average working population. The detection rate was much higher in the headquarters where the mean age of the participants was 42 compared with the logistic center where the mean age of the participants was 34.

Relevance

Skin screening at the workplace is an excellent tool to detect skin cancer at an early stage among a working population.