

How genetics play a role in developing melanoma

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A recent study from Cleveland Clinic shows that melanoma, which is the most serious type of skin cancer, isn't just caused by environmental factors. Researchers discovered genetics can also play a role.

"What we found was that one in six people who have melanoma and other cancers running in their family have a hereditary predisposition to melanoma and other cancers," Pauline Funchan, MD, who is the lead author on the study.

The study included 400 patients with melanoma and who have a family history of multiple cancers.

Based on the results, Dr. Funchan encourages those with melanoma to get genetic testing done.

If you are unfamiliar, genetic testing examines your DNA and determines whether you could be at risk for certain cancers, and that information can in turn help doctors develop a prevention plan.

Dr. Funchan said in a situation where a person does not have melanoma but their family member does, she advises that the family member with melanoma get the [genetic testing](#) done first.

"So if that person is a carrier, then we know what gene to look for and then other [family members](#) can all look to see if they carry that gene," she explained. "If they don't currently have melanoma, but let's say a family member has unfortunately passed from melanoma, there are testing options in that case when you aren't able to test the person who has the cancer."

Dr. Funchan said their research is far from over. They plan to further look at [genetic factors](#) that can cause [melanoma](#).

Dr. Funchan presented the findings in a poster discussion session at the 2022 American Society of Clinical Oncology Annual Meeting.

More information: Presentation abstract:

meetings.asco.org/abstracts-presentations/209888

Provided by Cleveland Clinic

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