Surgical treatment of melanoma

Mr. Adam Bialostocki
Plastic Surgeon
Surgery is the primary treatment for all stages of Melanoma.
WLE Rationale...

- The **Wide Local Excision** is for gaining a large ‘safety margin’ around the site of the primary Melanoma, to reduce the risk of recurrence **in that site only**.

- No evidence of an overall survival advantage
Treatment groups

- Divided into:
  - in situ
  - Thin = <1mm
  - Intermediate = 1-4mm
  - Thick = >4mm
In situ Melanoma

- No staging Investigations are indicated
- Requires WLE 5mm
Thin Melanomas [<1mm]

- Staging Investigations may have a **low** pick-up rate:
  - **blood tests** (LFTs, FBC, LDH)
  - **No Imaging**
    - ? US
    - ? CT

- Requires **referral** for:
  - WLE ~1cm
Intermediate Melanomas [1-4mm]

- Staging Investigations may still have a low pick-up rate.
  - blood tests (LFTs, FBC, LDH)
  - Imaging with CT or PET

- Requires referral for:
  - WLE 1-2cm
  - sentinel node biopsy
  - ~15% chance of + SN
Thick Melanomas [ >4mm ]

- Staging investigations are more important (10-26% positive)
- blood tests (LFTs, FBC, LDH)
- Imaging
  - CT or PET
- Requires referral for:
  - WLE ~2-3cm
  - complete lymph node dissection
Sentinel node biopsy

- For Melanomas between 1 & 4mm
- "To pick the patients who don’t need a full lymph node dissection"
- Injection of radionucleotide on morning of surgery
Sentinel node biopsy

- Localisation of the draining lymph node with probe.

- Important **prognostic** indicator:
  - **SN negative** = 12% Recurrence
  - **SN positive** = 46% Recurrence

- 5yr **survival is greater** in patients having a completion node dissection vs. observation
Regional Chemotherapy

- Isolated limb infusion
- Very high chemo dose that couldn’t be tolerated systemically

- For:
  - in-transit mets
  - Thick primaries
  - Multiple distal recurrence
  - Inoperable palliation
The future:

- vemurafenib

- this has shown cell death in Melanoma cell lines if \textbf{v600E} mutation is present (60-80%)

- Trials have shown 80% partial to complete regression, lasting \textit{2 to 18 months}.....