

# Health Care and Tumor Diseases With Special Consideration of Dermatology as Result of Increasing Aging

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## Abstract:

According to the Robert Koch Institute, around 492,000 cases of cancer were diagnosed in 2016 in Germany alone (RKI press release 2019). Although declining disease rates can be observed for numerous types of cancer, increasing trends in absolute numbers are forecast as a result of the increasing ageing of our society. For this reason, tumor diseases are of high political relevance. This applies in particular to those of the skin.

## Introduction

After cardiovascular diseases, cancer is the most common cause of death in the world's industrialized nations (Aigner & Stephens 2016). According to the Robert Koch Institute, around 492,000 cases of cancer were diagnosed in 2016 in Germany alone (RKI press release 2019). Although declining disease rates can be observed for numerous types of cancer, increasing trends in absolute numbers are forecast as a result of the increasing ageing of our society. For this reason, tumor diseases are of high political relevance. This applies in particular to those of the skin.

Lothar H. Wieler, President of the Robert Koch Institute, emphasizes the registration of malignant tumor diseases as an important task of general health care the aim of which is „to reduce the burden of disease caused by cancer in the population“ (RKI press release 2019). As a result of the establishment and expansion of the German cancer registries, it can be clearly seen that individual types of cancer are on the rise in terms of their frequency of occurrence. On the one hand, this circumstance signals a corresponding need for research, on the other hand, it allows the effects of early detection programs and the effects of prevention measures to be shown. At the same time, the cancer registries also reveal prevention potentials. This is where the present study, which will deal with the health care and disease prevention of tumor diseases, will be located - with special consideration of dermatological tumor diseases.

In general, the question arises as to what is meant by the term „health care“? Can we equate the term with „early detection“ or „disease prevention“ or does it mean something completely different? In principle, all three terms could be defined separately. For example, „health care“ could stand for maintaining our health by appropriate means, such as a balanced diet and exercise. In connection with tumor or cancer diseases, however, the term could possibly be more narrowly defined and could simply mean „early detection“.

Then the term „disease prevention“ as a preventive measure would be clearly distinguished from it. However, „health care“ and „disease prevention“ could also be understood as synonymous because preventive behavior serves to pre-

vent illness. In this sense, the announced study will first of all clarify, define and distinguish the terms. In addition, are you interested in what exactly is the difference between primary, secondary, tertiary and quaternary prevention? And which methods are suitable for the respective type of prevention?

Likewise, the announced study will deal with the extent to which the topics „health care“ and „disease prevention“ are represented in medical studies? Possibly there are also other study courses that deal with these topics? If so, it may be possible to derive synergies with regard to health care and disease prevention from the respective special knowledge of medical and other study programs, which could then be pursued further within our health system. Last but not least, the announced study will provide an introductory answer to the question of which organizations in Germany are concerned with health care and/or disease prevention? Precisely because cancer prevention must be understood as a task for society as a whole - as the Robert Koch Institute emphasizes in its press release from 2019 (RKI press release 2019) - these questions should be asked and answered urgently, because valuable impulses for the future could arise from the interaction of all institutions.

## Objective

The announced study will provide an overview of benign tumors and malignant neoplasias. To this end, the individual tumors will be briefly described. In particular, the study will focus on dermatological tumor diseases. These will be examined in more detail. Initially, these also include benign tumors and nevi. Furthermore, malignant tumors are considered, such as basal cell carcinoma, malignant epithelial tumors of the skin, malignant melanoma, malignant mesenchymal tumors of the skin, malignant neuronal tumors of the skin as well as cutaneous paraneoplasias. Malignant lymphomas and similar diseases will also be dealt with in more detail here.

In addition, current measures for health care and prevention of the individual types of cancer will be summarized and presented. Here again, special emphasis will be placed on skin cancer types. Furthermore, the study wants to give an overview of modern diagnostic procedures and forms of therapy.

It is planned to give a general overview of all tumors, especially skin tumors, and to put the sense of the corresponding health care in relation to it and to discuss it.

In order to be able to better assess the sense of health care and cancer prevention in particular, a practical part of the study is also planned in which patients with skin cancer are compared with each other regarding the course as well as the prognosis of their disease. Thereby it shall be tried to draw conclusions and to formulate corresponding statements to what extent regular health care and cancer prevention in the dermatological context can be classified as reasonable with regard to the detection, the course of the disease and the disease prognosis.

## Patients and methods

The study is divided into two parts. The first detailed part, which will give an overview of all tumor diseases with special consideration of dermatology and present the current diagnostic and therapeutic procedures as well as modern preventive measures is a pure literature work. Monographs and relevant textbooks will serve as a basis for this work. Furthermore, the databases PubMed and Medpilot are searched specifically for suitable studies and articles dealing with tumors, especially those of the skin, as well as with preventive measures for the prevention of tumors in general and those of the skin in particular. Current guidelines will also play an important role in this context.

The second part of the study will be of a practical nature. For this part skin cancer patients of a dermatological practice will be observed over a defined period of time. One half of the patients has regularly taken part in preventive health care, the other half presented themselves in the practice with an already existing skin tumor. The study intends to observe these patients with regard to their course of disease and the prognosis of the disease. The exact inclusion criteria are still being determined.

## Results and Discussion

Health care and disease prevention, in particular cancer prevention, are today considered a task for society as a whole (RKI press release 2019). In this context, the education of the population seems to be a priority, as „about half of

all cancer diseases“ in the Federal Republic of Germany can be „attributed to lifestyle factors“ according to expert estimates (Wikipedia Krebsprävention 2020).

Above all smoking, wrong diet, no or too little exercise, the consumption of too much alcohol and excessive exposure to UV rays are among the factors that can promote cancer. To a small extent, genetic conditions, occupational factors, infections and environmental and air pollutants are involved.

Numerous epidemiological as well as retrospective studies seem to suggest scientifically that rules of conduct that are given to the population are positive in terms of their preventive effectiveness. These include, for example, abstaining from smoking and avoiding alcohol. People today are also open-minded when it comes to nutrition. For example, many people are increasingly adopting a vegetarian or even vegan diet, whereby the renunciation of meat is certainly promoted by environmentally and climate-friendly aspects, especially among the younger population. On food and nutrition today nevertheless possibly still a larger attention could be put, particularly since there seems to be, as can be proven, numerous food which work in cancer prevention. Secondary plant compounds could also offer additional potential here.

In addition, many people today regularly exercise and try to maintain or reduce their weight. In Germany, the latter in particular is supported by health insurance companies, for example by financing nutritional advice, diet and weight loss courses and special gymnastics and training groups.

As a result of the education of the population, the latter is now also more sensitive to the effects of UV radiation. Similarly, increasing attention is being paid to reducing particulate matter and diesel soot and avoiding exposure to substances such as asbestos. Also harmful substances in food, such as molds or their poisons, are now known to a large part of the population.

However, education of the population can certainly not be the only way to avoid cancer, as some viruses and risk factors, such as the bacterium *Helicobacter pylori*, can also promote the development of cancer. Today, preventive vaccinations and eradication therapies are available. Similarly, certain drugs, such as tamoxifen, are

approved for chemoprevention in women with an increased risk of breast cancer, while other drugs, such as aspirin and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs are in the clinical trial phase with regard to their cancer-preventive effect (Theml 2005; Wikipedia Krebspraevention 2020). Prophylactic mastectomies, ovariectomies and orchiectomies can also be considered in appropriate constellations.

## Conclusion

These common and known preventive measures as well as other prophylactic measures discovered in the course of the announced study will be compared with the relevant literature and identical or differing findings will be discussed. In addition, there are also critical voices that doubt the sense of health care and preventive medicine (Muhlhauser 2018). These should also be considered in the announced study and included in the discussion. In addition, the findings that were gained from the practical part of the present study will be evaluated and compared with those of other studies.

Finally, the announced study wants to make proposals for reasonable future measures to support health care and cancer prevention as an outlook.

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