





# SKIN CANCER IN EB

Certain subtypes of EB are at higher risk of developing a type of skin cancer called **squamous cell carcinoma (SCC)**. In contrast with skin cancer in the general population, skin cancer in EB tends to affect younger patients starting in their second decade of life, occurs in more than one site at the same time (multifocal) and has a more aggressive course.

<b>Who is at risk</b> 	<p>Although most of the severe EB types can present with skin cancer, it more commonly affects patients with generalized RDEB. Other subtypes that can be affected are DDEB and non-Herlitz JEB and rarely, Dowling Meara type of EBS. For all other subtypes there is no increased risk of skin cancer above what is expected in the general population.</p>
<b>Symptoms</b> 	<p>Skin cancer usually presents with a chronic, non-healing ulcer. As ulcers and chronic wounds are common in severe EB subtypes, a high degree of vigilance is needed for both patients/families and their health care professionals. Signs that should increase suspicion for skin cancer are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in the wound healing time typical for patient</li> <li>• Wound feels or looks different from other wounds</li> <li>• Wound size increases rapidly</li> <li>• Wound is more painful than usual</li> <li>• There is persistent, hard, yellow-gray tissue next to a chronic wound</li> </ul>
<b>Prevention</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure regular (every 3-6 months) full skin inspection in high risk individuals by a specialized team.</li> <li>• Seek medical attention as soon as possible if any of the suspicious changes are noted.</li> </ul>
<b>Treatment</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treatment requires surgery to remove the cancerous area as completely as possible</li> <li>• Patients will require more investigations to detect the extent of the cancer (spread to lymph nodes, lungs, etc.).</li> <li>• The tumor may be so extensive that more invasive procedures may be required (such as limb amputation).</li> </ul>
<p>Useful Websites/links:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="http://www.swrwoundcareprogram.ca">www.swrwoundcareprogram.ca</a></li> <li>• EB Resources, including EB handbook: <a href="https://www.debracanada.org">https://www.debracanada.org</a></li> </ul>	

*Disclaimer: Unless stated otherwise, information contained in this document is taken from Epidermolysis Bullosa: A Handbook for EB Patients and Families, Developed by the Section of Dermatology at the Hospital for Sick Children with the Support of DEBRA Canada and Sick Kids Hospital Department of Dermatology EB Expert Team - all content used with permission. This document was created by SWRWCP (August, 2019).*