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Screening for Skin Cancer: U.S. Preventive Services Task Force Recommendation Statement

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* For a list of Task Force members, see the Appendix, available at www.annals.org.

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Abstract

Description: Update of the 2001 U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) recommendation statement on screening for skin cancer.

Methods: To update its recommendation, the USPSTF reviewed evidence published since 2001 on studies on screening effectiveness, the stage of detection by screening, and the accuracy of whole-body examination by primary care clinicians and self-examination by patients.

Recommendation: The USPSTF concludes that the current evidence is insufficient to assess the balance of benefits and harms of screening for skin cancer by primary care clinicians or by patient skin self-examination. (I statement)

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) makes recommendations about preventive care services for patients without recognized signs or symptoms of the target condition.

It bases its recommendations on a systematic review of the evidence of the benefits and harms and an assessment of the net benefit of the service.

The USPSTF recognizes that clinical or policy decisions involve more considerations than this body of evidence alone.

Clinicians and policymakers should understand the evidence but individualize decision making to the specific patient or situation.

Summary of Recommendation and Evidence

The USPSTF concludes that the current evidence is insufficient to assess the balance of benefits and harms of using a whole-body skin examination by a primary care clinician or patient skin self-examination for the early detection of cutaneous melanoma, basal cell cancer, or squamous cell skin cancer in the adult general population. This is an I statement.

See the Clinical Considerations section for information on risk assessment and suggestions for practice regarding the I statement.

See the [Figure](#) for a summary of this recommendation and suggestions for clinical practice.

