

Skin Cancer (Non-Melanoma) - Stages [1]

This section has been reviewed and approved by the [Cancer.Net Editorial Board](#) [2], 12/2013

ON THIS PAGE: You will learn about how doctors describe a cancer's growth or spread. This is called the stage. To see other pages, use the menu on the side of your screen.

Staging is a way of describing where the cancer is located, if or where it has spread, and whether it is affecting other parts of the body. Doctors use diagnostic tests to determine the cancer's stage, so staging may not be complete until all the tests are finished. Knowing the stage helps the doctor to decide what kind of treatment is best and can help predict a patient's prognosis (chance of recovery).

Basal cell and squamous cell carcinoma rarely spread to other parts of the body. On rare occasions, the patient's lymph nodes (tiny, bean-shaped organs that help fight infection) may be removed to determine if the cancer has metastasized. The doctor may perform other tests, including blood tests, chest x-rays, and imaging scans of the liver, bones, and brain, but this is uncommon.

Information about the cancer's stage will help the doctor recommend a treatment plan. The next section helps explain the treatment options for this type of cancer. Use the menu on the side of your screen to select Treatment Options, or you can select another section, to continue reading this guide.

Links:

[1] <http://www.cancer.net/cancer-types/skin-cancer-non-melanoma/stages>

[2] <http://www.cancer.net/about-us>