



# Scaly Hand Plaque

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A 67-year-old male presents with a scaly plaque on the back of his hand. It has slowly enlarged in the past year and is otherwise asymptomatic. He has a history of actinic keratoses and worked as a police officer.

## 1. What is the most likely diagnosis?

- Basal cell carcinoma
- Merkel cell carcinoma
- Tinea manuum
- Squamous cell carcinoma
- Irritated seborrheic keratosis

## 2. This lesion is more common in people with which of the following?

- Radiation exposure
- Actinic keratoses
- Arsenic exposure
- Chronic ulcer
- All of the above

## 3. How could you manage this lesion?


- Ellipse excision
- Curettage and electrosurgery
- Topical antifungal
- Phototherapy
- a and b

Squamous cell carcinoma (SCC) is currently the second most common skin cancer in Caucasians and the most common type in black patients. SCC can develop in the setting of actinic keratoses, leukoplakia, radiation dermatitis, chronic arsenic exposure, scars, burns, chronic ulcers or sinuses. There is thought to be a spectrum of keratinocyte



Figure 1. A scaly plaque on the hand.

malignant transformation: actinic keratoses (atypical keratinocytes in up to one-half of the epidermis), Bowen's disease or SCC *in situ* (full epidermal keratinocyte atypia) and invasive SCC (full epidermal involvement and invasion of dermis). The diagnosis of SCC is based on clinical suspicion and confirmed by biopsy for histology.

Treatment options include surgical excision or curettage and electrosurgery (similar cure rates). For well-differentiated small SCCs (< 2 cm), a 4 mm margin is recommended, whereas in larger tumours in high risk sites require at least a 6 mm margin. Larger SCCs and those that are poorly differentiated have a worse prognosis. Mohs micrographic surgery is indicated for aggressive subtypes of SCC, recurrent tumours, or highly aggressive features (e.g., SCC in a burn scar). Other options include radiation and cryosurgery in those with bleeding disorders or unable to withstand surgery or tumours in difficult to excise areas. 

Answers: 1-d; 2-e; 3-e

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