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Actinic keratosis and squamous cell carcinoma

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Introduction: The *Actinic keratosis* is a skin injury, premalignant, with the potential to turn into squamous cell carcinoma. It is therefore very important to be aware of skin lesions that are often undervalued by patients, and often inadvertently associated with aging.

Objectives: Early identification of the main risk factors for Actinic Keratosis, signs, and treatment, as well as their potential to progress to squamous cell carcinoma taking into account the perspective of clinical performance of the GP. Methodology: Bibliographical research articles in Portuguese, Spanish and English published in the last seven years, in medical sites Evidence Based and PubMed using the MeSH terms: *Actinic keratosis* and squamous cell carcinoma.

Results: The *Actinic keratosis* is a precursor lesion clinically associated with Squamous Cell Carcinoma and one of the most common diagnoses made by dermatologists. The frequency of malignant transformation and invasive potential of *Actinic keratosis* are not yet fully denied. Over the years, researchers have attempted to clarify the exact nature of the actinic lesion earlier and its evolution to Squamous Cell Carcinoma. Considerable progress in basic research has generated new insights about the genetic changes underlying the main skin cancers. The close relationship between *Actinic keratosis* and Squamous Cell Carcinoma continues to grow stronger, making the treatment of *Actinic keratosis* part of a preventive strategy that, combined with measures to reduce exposure to Ultraviolet radiation from the sun, aims to control this important public health problem.

Discussion: It is very important to the GP to be sensible of the close relationship between *Actinic keratosis* and squamous cell carcinoma. The treatment of *Actinic keratosis* in association with measures of Protection from ultraviolet (UV) radiation constitute a preventive strategy to control this important public health problem.