

15th World Conference on

Cosmetic Dermatology & Skin Diseases

September 25-26, 2019 | Lisbon, Portugal

Combined use of topical imiquimod and 5-fluorouracil in the management of in-transit cutaneous melanoma: A Case Report and Literature Review

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Statement of the Problem: While there are numerous therapeutic options available for in-transit cutaneous melanoma, the treatments are often unsuccessful due to suboptimal response rates. This motivates the use of combination therapies such as imiquimod and 5-fluorouracil to increase therapeutic efficacy. Imiquimod and 5-fluorouracil have distinct mechanisms of action, with imiquimod binding to toll-like receptor 7 and 8 on leukocytes and 5-FU inhibiting thymidylate synthase and inhibiting DNA synthesis. The purpose of this case report is to describe the course of an 87-year-old female with an 8-year history of cutaneous melanoma. Findings: The patient was initially managed with a wide local excision of the right shin lesion, as well as a split-thickness graft. She was further treated with a combination of 5% topical imiquimod cream and 5% 5-fluorouracil cream. There was complete clearance within 23 months, and the patient has been disease-free since. Conclusion & Significance: Given the patient's complete clearance and disease-free state since treatment, we postulate that imiquimod and 5-FU's synergistic mechanisms of action provide a valuable potential for targeting in-transit cutaneous melanoma in patients.