

EP-225

당뇨병성 족부 궤양으로 오인된  
발의 악성 흑색종

(Malignant Melanoma of the Foot  
Misdiagnosed as Diabetic Foot Ulcers)



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**Purpose:** Foot melanoma is a rare but aggressive malignancy that may clinically resemble diabetic foot ulcers, leading to diagnostic delay. In patients with diabetes mellitus, chronic foot lesions are frequently attributed to diabetic pathology, even when the clinical presentation is atypical. This study aims to raise awareness of the diagnostic pitfalls in patients with diabetes, highlighting the importance of considering melanoma in cases of atypical foot lesions.

**Methods:** We conducted a retrospective review of six patients who were initially referred with a diagnosis of diabetic foot ulcer but were ultimately diagnosed with malignant melanoma of the foot. Clinical presentation, presence of ulceration, diabetic status, time to diagnosis, Breslow depth, and nodal involvement were analyzed.

**Results:** Among the six cases, ulceration was present in four patients at initial presentation. Notably, all ulcerated cases demonstrated disease progression to the inguinal lymph nodes at the time of melanoma diagnosis. Despite having a history of diabetes mellitus, these patients did not exhibit severe diabetic complications that would typically account for refractory diabetic foot ulcers.

**Conclusion:** Non-healing foot ulcers in patients with diabetes should not be automatically attributed to diabetic foot disease, particularly when clinical features are inconsistent with typical diabetic ulcers. The presence of persistent or atypical ulceration should prompt early biopsy to exclude malignant melanoma.



Fig. 1.



Fig. 2.

**Fig. 1.** Preoperative photograph of 68-year-old female with malignant melanoma of the right forefoot, initially appearing as a corn-like lesion that gradually enlarged and ulcerated. An approximately 3 × 5 cm ulcer with exposed hemorrhagic/necrotic tissue is seen at the plantar aspect of the right 2nd MTP area.

**Fig. 2.** Preoperative photograph of 69-year-old female with malignant melanoma of the right heel arising from a long-standing (>20 years) pigmented nevus that progressively enlarged and ulcerated. A large, darkly pigmented plaque with a protruding fungating nodular component is visible at the posterolateral heel.



Fig. 3.

**Fig. 3.** Preoperative photograph of 76-year-old male with a >20-year history of diabetes mellitus, initially referred as a diabetic foot ulcer. A round, ulcerated lesion with central pink-violaceous fungating tissue is shown.