Metastatic Melanoma and Oculodermal Melanocytosis (Ota's Nevus): A Case Report

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Introduction: Ota's nevus is a benign dermal melanocytosis that can pose a risk for the development of glaucoma or choroidal melanoma. We present the case of a 53-year-old patient to emphasize the need for regular ophthalmological follow-up in oculodermal melanocytosis and the importance of multidisciplinary monitoring, including dermatological and neurological assessments.

Case Report: The patient first noticed a subtle episcleral hyperpigmentation at the medial canthus of the left eye at age 8, which later increased in size by age 53. Physical examination revealed bluish-grey skin pigmentation and black episcleral and conjunctival pigmentation at the medial angle of the eye. The patient underwent excision of a 4.5 × 5 cm lesion, which was histologically consistent with melanoma. Further imaging, including CT and PET scans, revealed pulmonary nodules suggestive of secondary malignancy. The patient was referred to oncology for management.

Discussion: Ocular melanocytosis, or dermal melanocytosis, is a congenital condition characterized by excessive pigmentation in periocular areas, the episclera, sclera, and choroid. First described by Ota in 1939, it is caused by the irregular migration of melanocytes from the neural crest. Though generally benign, malignant transformation, particularly into melanoma, is a concern in oculodermal melanocytosis. Malignant degeneration can affect multiple sites, including the choroid, brain, and skin.

Conclusion: Patients with oculodermal melanocytosis are at increased risk of uveal melanoma and metastasis, necessitating continuous surveillance. As treatment options for metastatic uveal melanoma are limited, early detection and intervention are crucial.