

Understanding skin changes over time

A closer look at research on serial dermoscopy, total-body mole mapping, and digital image comparison—and what it means for patients.

This edition highlights selected research from 2025–2026.

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01 / SERIAL DERMOSCOPY

Small changes deserve a closer look

Gündüz et al. · JAAD · August 6, 2026

A study followed 1,923 melanocytic lesions with peripheral globules—small structures around the edges of certain moles. Persistent or increasing globules, greater pigmentation, and faster growth were associated with clinically significant findings on tissue examination.

What this means for patients

The way a lesion changes can add useful information to its appearance at one visit. Clinicians consider these changes alongside the patient’s history. Not every growing mole is cancerous.

In context: This was a single-centre study, and not every lesion had tissue confirmation. This summary is based on the abstract and the authors’ supplementary-material description.

Worth reading in full for clinicians interested in serial monitoring.

[Read the research](#)

03 / LONGITUDINAL IMAGING

Connecting today’s images with earlier visits

Ghahari et al. · Scientific Data · September 30, 2025

A research dataset links total-body image crops, close-up dermoscopic images, and patient information. Repeated imaging is available for 340 participants across two to seven time points.

What this means for patients

Correctly connecting each lesion with its earlier images helps researchers study changes over time. Clear image records are central to meaningful comparisons.

In context: The dataset includes few confirmed melanomas and limited ethnic diversity. It is a research resource, not proof of diagnostic benefit.

The summary is sufficient for most readers.

[Read the research](#)

02 / DIGITAL COMPARISON

Technology supports clinical judgement

Lew et al. · Frontiers in Medicine · July 6, 2026

A review explored artificial intelligence tools that help identify lesions and match them between 3D total-body photography visits. Promising technical results have not yet established consistent improvements in patient outcomes or clinical workload.

What this means for patients

An apparent change on an image still needs interpretation in context. Matching the correct lesion across visits is an essential part of a useful comparison.

In context: This is a research review, not a clinical validation trial or an evaluation of every commercial imaging system.

The summary is sufficient for most patients; the full review is useful for understanding the technology.

[Read the research](#)

04 / FOLLOW-UP WORKFLOWS

How imaging fits into care matters

Soyer et al. · JAMA Dermatology · March 26, 2025

A randomized trial of 314 high-risk patients found that adding 3D total-body photography and serial dermoscopy to usual care increased excisions without a significant increase in melanomas diagnosed per person.

What this means for patients

The value of surveillance depends on how imaging, clinical assessment, and follow-up work together. More imaging does not automatically mean fewer biopsies.

In context: The trial tested an additional surveillance service using a particular 3D system. Its results do not apply equally to every mole-mapping programme.

Worth reading in full for clinicians and people planning surveillance services.

[Read the research](#)

A note for patients

This digest is for general education. Imaging supports clinical assessment but cannot confirm or exclude every skin cancer. If you notice a new, changing, bleeding, or otherwise concerning lesion, seek medical assessment rather than waiting for your next scheduled scan.