

Suspicious pigment spots more common on darker skin

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Screening can detect rare 'Bob Marley' skin cancer, study says.

(HealthDay)—People with darker skin are about one-third more likely to have potentially dangerous pigment "spots" on their palms and soles, a new study finds.

In rare cases, these "acral pigmented [lesions](#)" turn out to be melanoma skin cancer. People with these lesions should have them checked by a dermatologist to be sure they are benign, the researchers said.

Reggae musician Bob Marley, for example, died from acral melanoma, which was diagnosed under his toenail.

"Acral pigmented lesions have not been well studied in people with darker skin," senior study author Dr. Jennifer Stein, an associate professor in the department of dermatology at NYU Langone Medical

Center in New York City, said in a center news release.

Stein's team evaluated the [palms](#) and soles of 1,052 [patients](#) seen at dermatology clinics in New York City and Miami. The researchers detected 391 acral pigmented lesions on palms and 278 on soles.

The lesions were found on 30 percent of white patients and 40 percent of those with darker skin—about a 30 percent difference. The researchers also found that 44 percent of patients with the darkest skin had the lesions, compared with 28 percent of those with the lightest [skin](#).

Acral pigmented lesions were also associated with a higher number of moles, especially among minority patients.

Only 54 percent of patients with these lesions on their palms and 43 percent who had them on their soles knew they had them, according to the study published online Dec. 14 in the *Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology*.

More information: The American Academy of Family Physicians has more about [skin cancer](#).

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