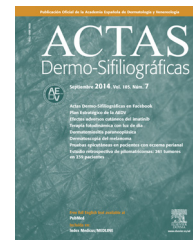




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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Skin Cancer Prevention and Detection Campaign at Golf Courses on Spain's Costa del Sol[☆]



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KEYWORDS

Sun protection;
Skin cancer;
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Abstract

Background and objectives: Skin cancer prevention and detection campaigns targeting specific groups are necessary and have proven to be more effective than those aimed at the general population. Interventions in outdoor tourist spots have proven successful, although none have specifically targeted golf courses. The aims of this study were to describe the risk profile of golfers and golf course workers and evaluate the impact of a skin cancer prevention and early detection intervention.

Material and methods: This was a cross-sectional descriptive study conducted at 6 golf courses. The intervention included a skin examination and completion of a questionnaire about demographic details, risk factors, and sun exposure and sun protection habits. Participants were also given advice on sun protection measures, self-examination, and use of sunscreens, and were asked about their satisfaction with the intervention and their intention to change their current behaviors. The effect was measured in terms of the diagnoses made, satisfaction with the intervention, reported intention to change, and potential effect in terms of existing risk factors.

Results: Of the 351 participants (57% golfers and 43% golf course workers), 70.4% had fair skin, 11.7% had a family history of skin cancer, and 8.5% had a personal history of skin cancer. Skin cancer and actinic keratoses were diagnosed in 10.7% and 40% of the golfers, respectively. The session was rated positively by 99.4% of the participants; 93.9% stated that they intended to improve their sun exposure habits and 93.4% said that they planned to examine their skin more frequently.

Conclusions: Our findings confirm that golf course workers and, in particular, golfers are an important target for skin cancer prevention campaigns. This is the first intervention to specifically target golf courses, and it proved to be both feasible and useful. Its success appears to be

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attributable to numerous factors: it was conducted at golf courses, had multiple components, and was preceded by a motivational campaign.

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Campaña de prevención y detección de cáncer cutáneo en campos de golf de la Costa del Sol

Resumen

Introducción y objetivos: El desarrollo de programas de prevención y detección de cáncer cutáneo específicamente dirigidos a grupos diana -de mayor rentabilidad que aquellos desarrollados sobre la población general- es necesario. Intervenciones en enclaves turísticos al aire libre ya demostraron eficacia, aunque no existen campañas específicas en campos de golf. Nuestros objetivos fueron describir el perfil de riesgo de los trabajadores y jugadores de golf y evaluar el impacto de una intervención.

Material y métodos: Estudio transversal descriptivo desarrollado en 6 campos de golf, realizándose cuestionarios sobre datos demográficos, factores de riesgo y hábitos de exposición solar y fotoprotección, examen cutáneo. Se impartió consejo sanitario en fotoprotección, autoexamen y cremas fotoprotectoras, y finalmente se completaron encuestas de satisfacción e intención de cambio. Se midió el efecto en términos de: diagnósticos realizados, satisfacción con la intervención e intención expresada de cambio y efecto potencial en términos de factores de riesgo presentes.

Resultados: De 351 participantes (el 57% golfistas, el resto trabajadores) el 70,4% tenían piel clara, el 11,7% tenían antecedentes familiares y el 8,5% personales de cáncer de piel. Entre los golfistas se diagnosticó cáncer cutáneo en el 10,7% y queratosis actínicas en el 40%. El 99,4% de los participantes valoró las jornadas positivamente, el 93,9% refirió intención de mejorar sus hábitos de fotoexposición y el 93,4% intención de examinarse la piel más frecuentemente.

Conclusiones: Trabajadores de campos de golf y especialmente golfistas se confirman como una importante diana para la prevención del cáncer cutáneo. Esta es la primera campaña dirigida a estos grupos, resultando factible y útil el desarrollo de las mismas; su éxito parece relacionado con el desarrollo en el propio escenario, la intervención multicomponente y su estrategia publicitaria motivacional.

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Introduction

Skin cancer is the most common malignancy in white populations and is one of the costliest cancers to treat.^{1,2} The incidence of skin cancer in white people in Europe, North America, and Australia has steadily increased by 3% to 8% each year since 1960,³⁻⁸ and melanoma has the fastest-growing incidence in white populations of any type of cancer.⁸ These trends are a consequence of various factors, including the aging of the population, ozone depletion, and recreational sun exposure habits.^{6,8,9} In Spain, the incidence of skin cancer has tripled in recent decades and, despite advances in early diagnosis, the melanoma mortality rate continues to increase at a faster pace than that of any other malignancy.³

Sun exposure is the only major environmental causative factor for skin cancer (and precancer) that is preventable,^{6-8,10,11} and avoidance of intense intermittent sun exposure—the sort that occurs in golfers—and chronic sun exposure—the sort that occurs in golf course workers—is fundamental to prevention.^{10,12}

Spain's Costa del Sol has a higher concentration of golf courses than any other region of Europe—hence its

nickname, “Costa del Golf”—and it is also home to many foreign-born individuals, predominantly from northern and central Europe,¹³ who are attracted by the region's more than 300 days of sun per year.¹⁴ These residents have been identified as a group at risk of developing skin cancer and their high prevalence of cutaneous neoplasms¹⁵ is fundamentally associated with recreational sun exposure, often golf-related. Likewise, many tourists—especially those from outside of Spain, in particular northern and central Europeans—are attracted to the region's sun and beaches, but also in many cases to its golf courses. Outdoor workers—such as golf course workers, who receive chronic sun exposure—are another a priori at-risk group. Nevertheless, no interventions specifically designed to target these at-risk groups have been reported. Therefore, although golf is unquestionably beneficial to health,¹⁶ it is fundamental that golfers and golf course workers acquire correct sun protection habits in order to avoid developing skin cancer.

We carried out a skin cancer early detection and prevention campaign at golf courses on the Costa del Sol. The aims of this study were to describe the risk profile of golfers and golf course workers and to evaluate the impact

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