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Merkel Cell Carcinoma

National Cancer Institute

Source

National Cancer Institute. *Merkel Cell Carcinoma*. NCI Thesaurus. Code C9231.

A rare malignant cutaneous tumor seen in elderly patients. Its usual location is on the head, neck and extremities. The tumor is composed of small round cells with scanty cytoplasm arranged in a trabecular pattern, or in ill-defined nodules or in a diffuse pattern. The tumor cells contain cytoplasmic membrane-bound dense core granules resembling neurosecretory granules. There is strong evidence implicating Merkel cell polyomavirus in a majority of cases of Merkel cell carcinoma.