

Merkel cell carcinoma is an aggressive tumor with high rate of metastasis and mortality.

Ideally, the goal is to remove the tumor with a margin before spread/metastasis has occurred.

Imaging for distant disease may include a PET-CT.

A new test, AMERK, is used to detect antibodies to the tumor. It is only useful in patients that produce antibodies.

Of the 2000 tumors detected per year, polyomavirus drives over 80% of cases. Human Polyomavirus is highly associated with merkel cell carcinoma

As in melanoma, timely removal is the best treatment. Unfortunately, this tumor likes to metastasize (travel from primary site)

www.merkelcell.org, [www.emedicine.com](http://www.emedicine.com)

Drugs showing promise include:

Ipilimumab (Yervoy) (CTLA-4), Nivolumab (Opdivo), Pembrolizumab (Keytruda), Avelumab (Bavencio) FDA approved 3/23/2017

www.greaterdesmoinesdermatology.com