

# Trends and future

of skin cancer diagnostics -  
 an interview with Prof. Dr.

## Giuseppe Argenziano

**How important is the video dermatoscope as well as total body photography in your fight against melanomas?**

It is important, of course, especially for patients with multiple nevi. This is the only way to catch melanomas early, while decreasing the number of unnecessary excisions of benign lesions. The usual strategy we use for patients with multiple nevi, is checking everything with our portable dermatoscope and then doing total body photography, before we finally pick up the few nevi which are more atypical, in order to make a follow-up over time.

**Can you describe the advantages of ATBM® with polarization as well as how the procedure increases diagnostic accuracy now and in the future?**

This is a great technological advancement. The point is this: I see a future in which we stop doing images of the single lesion but we just do total body photography, so that's my idea for the future. Of course, now, the new technology has just started, so there will be room for improvement. But as soon as we have polarized total body photography of sufficient quality, I assume we will completely change the way we manage patients with ugly moles.

**How can the ATBM® procedure benefit scientific work and clinical studies?**

Concerning this point, I really think that some research in the field of polarized total body photography should be made. We need to compare the usual way to follow-up patients with multiple nevi versus the new way of polarized total body photography. In my view, we need to prove that the new way of polarized total body photography will allow clinicians to catch more melanomas and to reduce unnecessary excisions of benign lesions.

**What is most important in taking and analyzing dermoscopic images?**

We need sufficient image quality, and we need good software. A software program that is simple to use, is not cumbersome, and which allows us to speed up the entire process. These are the two key features: image quality and quality of the database.

**What features distinguish a good image from others? What makes an image particularly useful for skin cancer diagnostics?**

Nowadays, clearly, the most important thing is no longer the resolution, because it is already sufficient. What is

extremely important is the color reproduction. We need to see the right colors and not all video-dermatoscopes are able to reproduce the exact color that we can see with, say, conventional, non-digital dermoscopy.

**You have developed the 3-points checklist for early detection of melanoma. Has this one replaced former dermoscopy rules?**

No, it has not substituted the previous algorithms but it has just given some help to beginners to have a fast and simple way to start using dermoscopy in their practice.

**Before finishing, what do you recommend to young doctors who want to specialize in dermatology, an area which is more and more dominated by aesthetics?**

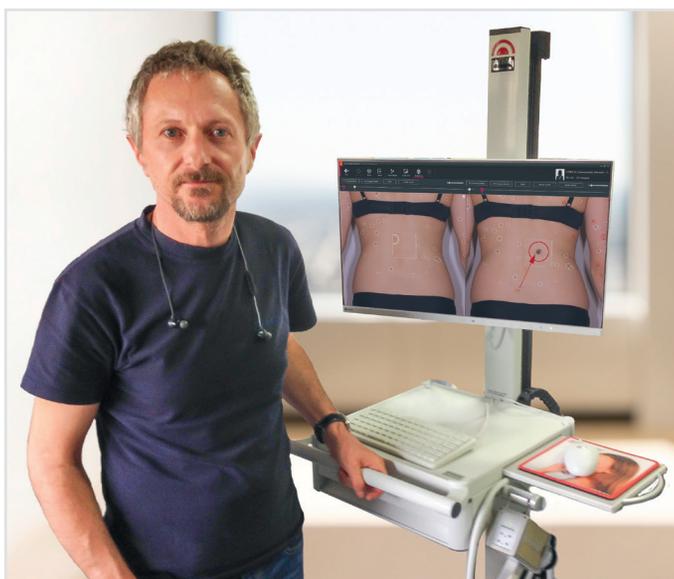
Well, I agree completely. I am among those dermatologists who are not dealing with cosmetic procedures. Of course, we have to make a choice. We cannot do everything. There is a certain point where we have to choose if we like to deal with sick patients or if we like to deal with healthy patients. In my view, as a doctor, reasonably we should prefer to deal with sick patients and to try to solve the health problems of our patients. But, of course, many of us are also choosing the other way, which is helping patients in becoming more cosmetically acceptable. It's just a matter of choice.

**You are known as a passionate dermatologist. Since work occupies a large part of your life, do you still find time for other interests?**

Very little, I must confess. Let's say, when I don't work, I try to relax, and when I have time, I try to dedicate it to my other two passions. One is music, I play drums sometimes, and the other passion is photography. I especially like street photography. When I am traveling, I try to bring my camera with me.

“ I see a future in which we stop doing images of the single lesion but we just do total body photography.”

— Prof. Dr. Giuseppe Argenziano



*Giuseppe Argenziano is Professor of Dermatology at the Second University of Naples and Coordinator of the Skin Cancer Unit Reggio Emilia, Italy. He is known around the world for his passionate work and research in the field of dermato-oncology, with particular emphasis on melanoma. Besides developing new melanoma diagnosis techniques, he has created an important research center and published numerous scientific articles and books.*