Sites of Pitch Epitheliomas

Head and Neck	154	Upper Limb	32	Genital Region	120	Other Parts	4
Forehead	1	Forearm	13	Scrotum	116	Chest	1
Face	18	Wrist	2	Penis	4	Back	1
Nose	10	Hand	15			Leg	2
Eye & Eyelid	31	Finger	2				
Cheek	26						
Chin	6						
Lips	40						
Scalp	3						
Neck	8						
Ear	11						
Bridge and Henry	116		11		28		8

While pitch papillomas follow tar cancers in regard to their local distribution, showing a prevalence for head and neck lesions, pitch epitheliomas exhibit a marked tendency for localizing on the scrotal skin, similar to chimney sweep's cancers and epitheliomas seen on mule spinners. This conclusion, reached through data obtained from numerous sources, is neither in agreement with the statistical evidence supplied by Bridge and Henry, nor supported by the observations of Kennaway. This investigator stated that pitch is more liable to cause cancer of the head and neck than of the scrotum (63 cancers of the head and neck against 32 epitheliomas of the scrotum). It was asserted, moreover, by Kennaway that neither the rugosity of the scrotal skin nor its abundance of sebaceous glands, and thus a marked production of sebum, produce any predisposition for pitch cancer. These contentions, however, are of controversial nature. Sladden, for instance, maintained that sebum favors the absorption of carcinogenic material, while White acknowledged this rôle of sebum only when it is present in excess. Downing claimed that sebum was a protective against the action of pitch and tar. This assertion agrees with the observation that colored persons (Negroes), who normally have oily skin, appear to be much less susceptible to pitch and tar cancer than white persons, especially those having dry skin.

There exist, however, a number of additional factors which favor the development of pitch cancer in the scrotal skin. Although the duration and intensity of exposure to any carcinogenic agent plays a rôle concerning the causation and onset of the neoplastic response, it is certain that the rugose character of the scrotal skin, which favors the retention of pitch, facilitates the cancerigenic action of this agent. An abundant sebum production helps in fixing the pitch dust to the skin, and in hindering its ready removal by soap and water, which is, also, interfered with by the rugosities. Apart from the presence of the carcinogenic agent these accessory factors may be added: