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Confocal Reflectance Microscopy in Dermatology: Promise and Reality of Non-Invasive Diagnosis and Monitoring

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ABSTRACT

IN VIVO reflectance confocal microscopy (RCM) constitutes a novel non-invasive imaging method that enables visualization of cells and structures in living skin in real time with resolution close to histological analysis.

RCM has been successfully implemented in the assessment of benign and malignant lesions. It also enables monitoring dynamic changes in the skin over time and in response to different stimuli, such as ultraviolet exposure or specific treatments.

The non-invasive nature of this technique allows repetitive sampling without biopsy collection, causing no further damage to the areas under investigation. In this article, I provide an overview of RCM, including the latest technological advances as well as novel applications in the characterization of both normal and pathological skin.