

The Evaluation of Melanocyte Presence in Preserved Cadaveric Tissue

Abstract

Melanocytes are commonly known as cells that produce melanin to protect the integumentary system from harmful UV radiation. However, research in the past decade has identified the presence of melanocytes in the pulmonary veins of the heart, the ear, and the peripheral nervous system of live mice and post mortem human bodies. The presence of melanocytes in these regions have been linked to various disease processes due to under expressed proteins and transcription factors that regulate these cells. The goal of this research is to identify melanocytes in non-integumentary organs. Tissue samples will be collected from embalmed cadavers and undergo immunohistochemistry antibody staining to detect the presence of melanocytes in the tissue. If melanocytes are found in these tissues, further research will be done to examine how they are linked to various disease processes in that region of the body.