Pigmented Spitz nevi: improvement of the diagnostic accuracy by epiluminescence microscopy.

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BACKGROUND: Pigmented Spitz nevi have distinct clinical features but often may be difficult to differentiate from malignant melanoma by clinical criteria. OBJECTIVE: The purpose of this study was to use a new noninvasive diagnostic approach to improve the clinical diagnosis of Spitz nevi. METHODS: Epiluminescence microscopy (ELM) is a new, noninvasive technique for which criteria for the diagnosis of melanocytic tumors, benign and malignant, recently have been established. These criteria were tested in an investigation of 54 pigmented Spitz nevi. RESULTS: With ELM the accuracy of clinical diagnosis of pigmented Spitz nevi improved from 56% (clinical) to 93% (ELM). CONCLUSION: Our findings suggest that ELM criteria are useful to improve the accuracy of clinical diagnosis of Spitz nevi.