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皮膚科学と色との関わり

五十嵐敦之

The Relationship between Dermatology and the Color

Atsuyuki IGARASHI

Abstract

The color is important in dermatology, and the difference of the color is an important point for differential diagnosis of the skin disease. In the textbook of dermatology, you can find lots of disease names in conjunction with color such as blue nares, green nail, and so on. The main component which determines the skin color is melanin. It is interesting that the color tone from outside is changing depending on the existence position of melanin in the skin. Melanin itself is dark brown or black color. Interestingly, when melanin is located in the dermis which is deeper than epidermis, the color looks like bluish. The reason of this phenomenon has not been clearly explained. It is no doubt that the cutaneous vein looks like blue. But the cutaneous vein itself is not blue but flesh color near gray in color science. Visual illusion makes the cutaneous vein blue colored. It is said that when a certain area is surrounded by other color area, the color of the hue opposite to the circled color is guided to the original area. If the circled color is yellow, blue is led as opposite hue. I assume similar mechanism would participate in dermal melanocytosis looking blue. Actually, I was able to confirm that gray oval looked bluish when the gray oval background was made flesh color.

Key words: dermatology, skin color, melanin, visual illusion.