Mycosis fungoides is a rare form of T-cell lymphoma of the skin (cutaneous); the disease is typically slowly progressive and chronic. In individuals with mycosis fungoides, the skin becomes infiltrated with plaques and nodules that are composed of lymphocytes. In advanced cases, ulcerated tumors and infiltration of lymph nodes by diseased cells may occur. The disorder may spread to other parts of the body including the gastrointestinal system, liver, spleen, or brain. The exact cause of mycosis fungoides is not known. Current theories include antigen persistence, retroviruses (e.g., HTLV-1, etc.), and exposure to cancer-causing (carcinogenic) substances. Mycosis fungoides rarely occurs before age 40 years. It affects males twice as often as females. A diagnosis of mycosis fungoides may be made by a thorough clinical evaluation and a variety of specialized techniques and tests including DNA cytophotometry, nuclear contour analysis, and analysis of T-cell receptor gene rearrangement.