Materials and Methods

An observational study was designed that included all 285 patients diagnosed with thin cutaneous MM (thickness ≤1 mm) at the Multidisciplinary Melanoma Unit at the Hospital Universitario Nuestra Señora de Candelaria (Tenerife, Canary Islands, Spain) from January 2002 to July 2017. The following variables were analysed: sex, age, clinicopathological variant, location, primary tumour thickness, presence of ulceration, number of dermal mitoses per square millimetre, T staging and DFS. After reviewing their pathological files, patients were staged in T1a and T1b groups according to both 7th and 8th editions. Blood test, chest X-ray and ultrasound scans were performed with every patient at diagnosis. 210 patients underwent physical or ultrasonographic examination of their nodal basins, and in 75 of them nodal status was assessed by sentinel node biopsy. No patient showed extracutaneous disease.

DFS was calculated from initial MM diagnosis. Patients were considered censored if still on complete remission at the last follow-up or if they died without evidence of MM. DFS curves were generated according to the Kaplan-Meier method and were compared using the log-rank test. Intergroup differences were analysed using the Mann-Whitney U test or the Kruskal-Wallis test for continuous variables and the χ^2 or Fisher test for dichotomous variables. All of the *p* values shown are 2-tailed ($\alpha = 5\%$). Statistical analyses were performed with SPSS 19.0™ (IBM Corp., Armonk, NY, USA). This study fulfilled our Hospital Ethics Committee's criteria.