British Association of Dermatologists

ARE YOU AT RISK?

Some people are more at risk of developing skin cancer than others. This is why we recommend that you get to know the most common risk factors.

RISK FACTOR	MELANOMA a less common but very serious type of skin cancer which can be fatal if not treated early	NON-MELANOMA very common type of skin cancer, which is usually less serious but still needs to be treated promptly
SKIN COLOUR/TYPE People with pale skin who are prone to burning. They often have light or red coloured hair and freckles. It is extremely rare for black people to get skin cancer in the UK.	✓	✓
SUNBURN Those who have suffered past cases of severe sunburn especially with blisters (particularly in childhood).	✓	Especially for Basal Cell Carcinoma (BCC) ✓
NUMBER OF MOLES People with many (more than 50) ordinary moles.	✓	✗
UNUSUAL MOLES People who have many unusual (atypical) moles. They tend to be larger than ordinary moles, to be present in large numbers, and to have irregular shapes or colour patterns.	✓	✗
FAMILY HISTORY Those with a close family member who has had a melanoma.	✓	✗
PREVIOUS SKIN CANCER People who have already had a skin cancer.	✓	✓
IMMUNE SYSTEM People with a supressed immune system (E.g. those taking medication after an organ transplant, or by treatment for leukaemia or a lymphoma).	✓	✓
OCCUPATION & LIFESTYLE People who have had a lot of overall exposure to the sun (even without burning) throughout their lives, such as people with outdoor hobbies or outdoor workers.	✗	Especially for Squamous Cell Carcinoma (SCC) ✓
SUNBED USE Those who use or have used sunbeds.	✓	✓
SUNBATHING People who regularly sunbathe or have done in the past.	✓	✓
AGE Skin cancer is uncommon in children, and your risk of developing all types of skin cancer increases with age. However, you can still get skin cancer when you are relatively young.	✓	✓

IF IN DOUBT, CHECK IT OUT!

You should tell your doctor about any changes to a mole or patch of skin. If your doctor is worried about something on your skin they can refer you for free through the NHS to see a skin cancer specialist, usually a Consultant Dermatologist, who is an expert in diagnosing and treating skin cancer.

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SUN AWARENESS
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