British Association of Dermatologists

A GUIDE TO CHECKING YOUR SKIN

Most skin cancers can be cured if detected early. The best way to detect skin cancer is to check your skin regularly, about once a month. You should examine the skin all over your body, from top to toe.

Look out for moles or patches of skin that are growing, changing shape, developing new colours, inflamed, bleeding, crusting, red around the edges, particularly itchy, or behaving unusually.

1. Look in a mirror and carry out a full upper body examination, checking your face, neck and chest right down to your hips. Ask a friend or family member to check your scalp, ears, back and all of the areas you can't easily see yourself.
2. Check your arms and elbows, including underarms and both sides of your hands.
3. Examine all of your lower body, checking your legs front and back, your feet, soles and even between your toes.

IF IN DOUBT, CHECK IT OUT!

You should tell your doctor about any changes to a mole or patch of skin. If your doctor thinks you have a skin cancer or is not sure, 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.

PROUDLY SUPPORTING BRITISH SKIN FOUNDATION SKIN CANCER APPEAL

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THE ABCD**EASY** WAY TO CHECK MOLES

There are two main kinds of skin cancer: melanoma and non-melanoma skin and each looks different. This leaflet deals specifically with melanoma, the less common but more deadly type of skin cancer.

Melanomas can develop from existing moles, but they can also appear as new 'mole-like' marks on normal skin.

This guide tells you a few of the signs that might indicate a melanoma. You should tell your doctor about any changes to your moles or skin, even if they are not the same as those described here.

ASYMMETRY

The two halves of the mole may differ in their shape and not match.

BORDER

The outside edges of the mole or area may be blurred, and sometimes show notches or look 'ragged'.

COLOUR

This may be uneven and patchy. Notice new colours appearing. Different shades of black, brown, pink and even purple may be seen.

DIAMETER

Melanomas will progressively change. If you see any mole, or 'mole-like' mark getting bigger over a period of weeks to months, tell your doctor.

EXPERT

Look out for change, and if in doubt, get it checked out by your doctor. If your doctor thinks you have a melanoma or is not sure, 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.

IS YOUR MOLE CHANGING? IF IN DOUBT, CHECK IT OUT!

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