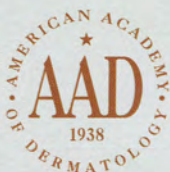


Skin Cancer

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF DERMATOLOGY



Whether your
skin needs
medical,
surgical or
cosmetic
treatment,
trust the
expert care
of a
board-certified
dermatologist.

Skin Cancer

Skin cancer is the most common cancer. More than 2 million Americans are diagnosed with skin cancer each year.

With early detection and treatment, skin cancer is highly curable. The most common warning signs of skin cancer include changes in size, shape, or color of a mole or other skin lesion or the appearance of a new growth on the skin.

Caucasians and men over 50 have an increased risk of developing melanoma.

SKIN CANCER AFFECTS EVERYONE

No matter your skin color, you can get skin cancer. Some people have a higher risk of developing skin cancer than others. Age is a key risk factor, but there are many other risk factors.

People with a higher risk for skin cancer have:

- Light colored skin
- Skin that burns or freckles rather than tans

- Blond or red hair
- Blue or green eyes
- More than 50 moles
- Irregularly-shaped or darker moles (nevi) called "atypical" or "dysplastic"
- Used (or use) indoor tanning devices such as tanning beds and sunlamps

Your medical history also can increase your risk of getting skin cancer. You have a much greater risk of developing skin cancer if you have:

- History of sunburns, especially blistering sunburns
- Received an organ transplant
- Had skin cancer (or a blood relative has/had skin cancer)
- A weakened immune system
- Received long-term x-ray therapy, such as x-ray treatments for acne
- Been exposed to cancer-causing compounds such as arsenic or coal
- An area of skin that has been badly burned, either in an accident or by the sun

TYPES OF SKIN CANCER

The most common types of skin cancer are:

- **BASAL CELL CARCINOMA (BCC)**
BCC is the most common type of skin cancer. BCC appears on the skin in many shapes and sizes. You may see a dome-shaped growth with visible blood vessels; a shiny, pinkish patch; or a sore that heals, and then returns.

BCC usually develops on skin that receives lots of sun, such as the scalp, nose, neck, and hands. BCC rarely spreads to other areas of the body, but it can grow deep into tissue and bone.



Basal Cell Carcinoma

- **SQUAMOUS CELL CARCINOMA (SCC)**

SCC is the second most common type of skin cancer. SCC appears on the skin in many shapes. You may see a crusted or rough bump; a red, rough flat patch; a dome-shaped bump that grows and bleeds; or a sore that does not heal, or heals and returns. SCC commonly develops on skin that is exposed to sun, such as the face, ears, lips, back of the hands, arms, and legs.

SCC also can develop on areas of the body that are not exposed to sun, such as inside the mouth or on the genitals. Smoking or chewing tobacco may increase the risk of getting SCC in the mouth or throat. Left untreated, SCC can spread to other parts of the body, making treatment difficult.



Squamous Cell Carcinoma

■ MELANOMA

This is the deadliest form of skin cancer. Melanoma may develop on normal skin or in an existing mole. A change to the shape, color, or diameter (size) of a mole can be a sign of melanoma. Other changes to watch for include a mole that becomes painful or begins to bleed or itch.

Some melanomas develop on normal skin. A new growth, particularly one that does not match your other moles, could be melanoma.

Melanoma also can develop under fingernails or toenails. This will look like a brown or black streak underneath the nail

Although melanoma is more common in those with light colored skin, people with skin of color also get melanoma. In skin of color, melanoma usually appears on a palms of the hands, soles of the feet, under a nail, in the mouth, or on the genitals.

ABCDEs of Melanoma Detection

When melanoma is caught early and treated, the cure rate is nearly 100%. Performing skin self-examinations can help you find skin changes that could be an early melanoma.

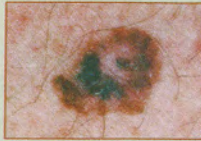
When looking at your skin for signs of melanoma, it helps to keep in mind the ABCDEs of Melanoma:



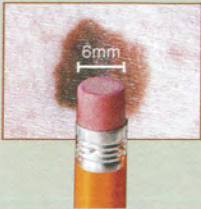
A stands for **ASYMMETRY**; one-half does not look like the other half.



B stands for **BORDER**; irregular, scalloped or poorly defined border.



C stands for **COLOR**; varied from one spot to another; shades of tan and brown, black; sometimes white, red, or blue.



D **DIAMETER**; melanomas are most often greater than 6 millimeters (the size of a pencil eraser) when diagnosed, but they can be smaller.

E stands for **EVOLVING**; a mole or skin growth that looks different from the rest or is changing in size, shape, or color.



Make an appointment to see a board-certified dermatologist as soon as possible if you notice a spot or mole on your skin that has any of these characteristics:

- Fits any of the ABCDEs of Melanoma
- Differs from the other moles and spots on your skin.

- Changes, itches, or bleeds, even if the spot is smaller than 6mm

■ ACTINIC KERATOSES (AK)

Actinic keratoses (AKs) are common skin growths. AKs are considered precancerous. Left untreated, an AK may turn into squamous cell carcinoma (SCC).

Most AKs are dry, scaly, rough-textured spots on the skin. AKs form on skin that receives lots of sun, such as on the head, including the lips and scalp; arms; and hands.

Women frequently get AKs on the backs of their legs. AKs can form, disappear, and then return.



Actinic Keratosis

SKIN EXAMINATIONS CAN FIND SKIN CANCERS EARLY

There are two types of skin examinations. A skin self-exam involves checking your skin for signs of changes.

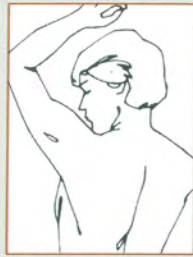
Your dermatologist performs the other type of skin exam. How often a patient should see a dermatologist for a skin exam varies from patient to patient. Your dermatologist will tell you how often you should have a skin exam. It is very important that you keep every appointment for a skin exam.

HOW TO EXAMINE YOUR SKIN

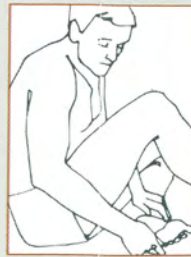
The skin self-examination can help you find skin cancer early when treatment can cure the cancer. If you notice anything that is growing, changing or bleeding, immediately make an appointment to see your dermatologist.



1 Examine your body front and back, then raise your arms and look at your right and left sides.



2 Bend your elbows; look carefully at your forearms, back of upper arms, and palms of your hands.



3 Look at backs of your legs and feet, paying close attention to the spaces between your toes, and your soles.



4 Using a hand mirror, examine the back of your neck. To examine your scalp, part and lift your hair.



5 Finally, use a hand mirror to more closely examine your back and buttocks.

EARLY TREATMENT HAS A HIGH CURE RATE

Caught early and properly treated, skin cancer can be cured. Even melanoma, which can be deadly, has a cure rate of almost 100% when treated early.

Proper treatment begins with the right diagnosis. To diagnose skin cancer, a dermatologist performs a skin biopsy. This is the best way to diagnose skin cancer. Your dermatologist can perform a biopsy during an office visit.

To perform a biopsy, your dermatologist will remove either the entire skin growth or part of it. The removed skin will be sent to a lab where it will be examined under a microscope.

If the diagnosis is skin cancer, your dermatologist will consider the type of skin cancer, the size

and location of the skin cancer, and your health to determine the best treatment for you. When caught early and the entire growth is removed, further treatment may not be needed. If further treatment is needed, your dermatologist will discuss your treatment options and make recommendations.

PREVENT. DETECT. LIVE.

Sun exposure is the most preventable risk factor for all skin cancers, including melanoma. The following can help you detect and prevent new skin cancers:

■ **Keep all appointments with your dermatologist.** When found early, skin cancer can often be cured. Even melanoma has a cure rate of nearly 100% when found early and treated.

■ **Perform skin self-examinations.** Examine your skin as often as your dermatologist recommends. Be sure to check your scalp, ears, genitals, and buttocks.

■ **If you notice anything changing, growing, or bleeding on your skin, immediately make an appointment to see your dermatologist.** Tell the person who schedules the appointment why you want to see your dermatologist.

■ **Protect your skin every day by:**

■ **Seeking shade.** Shade helps protect your skin from the sun's harmful UV rays. Shade is especially important between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. when the sun's rays are strongest. But any time your shadow is shorter than you are, seek shade.

■ **Protecting your skin when around water, snow, and sand.** These reflect and intensify the damaging rays of the sun.

■ **Wearing protective clothing.** This means wearing a long-sleeved shirt, pants, a wide-brimmed hat, and sunglasses, when possible.

■ **Generously applying sunscreen that offers broad-spectrum (UVA and UVB) protection, water resistance, and a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of 30 or more.** Wearing sunscreen every day, studies show, can reduce the risk of developing melanoma by half. Be sure to apply the sunscreen every day before going outside. Apply enough sunscreen to all skin that clothing will not cover. You should reapply

sunscreen every two hours, even on cloudy days. After swimming or sweating, you also need to reapply sunscreen.

■ **Protecting your family and friends.**

Make sure children are protected from excessive sun exposure.

■ **Never use a tanning bed.** UV light from the sun and tanning beds can cause skin cancer and wrinkling. If you want to look tan, consider using a self-tanning product or spray. Even when using one of these products, you need to use sunscreen.



A board-certified dermatologist is a medical doctor who specializes in treating the medical, surgical and cosmetic conditions of the skin, hair and nails. To learn more about skin cancer or to find a board-certified dermatologist in your area, log onto www.aad.org or call toll-free (888) 462-DERM (3376).

You can learn more by visiting SPOT Skin Cancer® at www.SpotSkinCancer.org. Here you can learn how to perform a skin self-exam, download a body mole map (a sheet to help you track changes on your skin), and find free skin cancer screenings in your area. You also can download free materials to help you educate others about skin cancer. If you've been affected by skin cancer, you are invited to share your story.

TO LEARN MORE

Contact the American Academy of Dermatology (AAD), which represents almost all dermatologists in the U.S. and has more than 17,000 members worldwide. Most of the Academy's members are board-certified in dermatology, which means they have completed a three-year residency and passed a rigorous two-part test administered by the American Board of Dermatology.

Visit the Academy's website at www.aad.org to:

- Locate a board-certified dermatologist in your area;
- Read information on a variety of skin conditions;
- Get advice about skin cancer prevention and detection, and other ways to care for your skin; and
- Learn about the latest dermatologic procedures and how to make informed decisions about having those procedures.

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