

SKIN CANCER

Anyone can get skin cancer, regardless of skin color. It is estimated 1 in 5 Americans will develop skin cancer in their lifetime. When caught early, skin cancer is highly treatable.

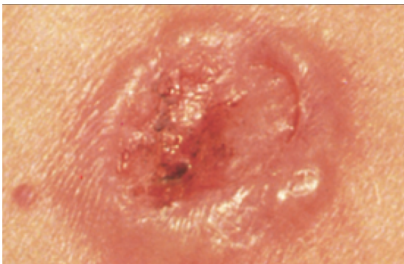
ACTINIC KERATOSIS

Actinic Keratosis (AK) is a scaly, rough, dry spot(s) that forms when the skin is badly damaged by UV rays from the sun or indoor tanning. AKs most commonly develop on the face, ears, head, forearms, and neck. AKs are considered precancerous and if left untreated, they may turn into a type of skin cancer called squamous cell carcinoma.



BASAL CELL CARCINOMA

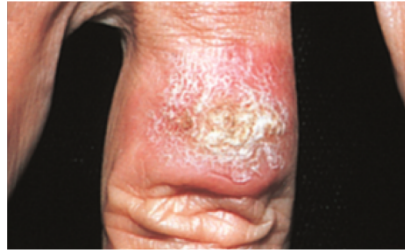
Basal cell carcinoma (BCC) is the most common type of skin cancer. Most frequently it appears as a shiny, pearly bump or a scaly pink patch of skin. BCC usually develops on areas frequently exposed to the sun, such as the head, neck, arm, and hands. BCC can also appear on the trunk and legs. People who use tanning beds also get BCC, and they also tend to get it earlier in life. This type of skin cancer grows slowly. It rarely spreads to other parts of the body. Treatment is important because BCC can grow wide and deep, destroying skin, tissue, and bone.



SQUAMOUS CELL CARCINOMA

Squamous cell carcinoma (SCC) is the second most common skin cancer. This skin cancer tends to develop on skin that has been exposed to the sun for years, such as the head, neck, ears, and back of the hands. It is possible to get SCC on any part of the body, including the inside of the mouth, lips, and genitals. Women frequently get SCC on their lower legs.

SCC most commonly appear as a firm bump, scaly patch, or an ulcer (open sore) that does not heal. People who use tanning beds have a much higher risk of getting SCC, and tend to get SCC earlier in life. SCC can spread to other parts of the body. SCC can grow deep and result in damage, disfigurement, and spread to other areas of the body. However, with early diagnosis and treatment, SCC is highly curable.

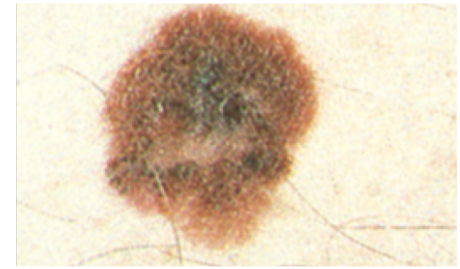


MELANOMA

This type of skin cancer typically develops as a sudden dark mark on the skin or in a mole that has recently changed. Melanoma is the most serious type of skin cancer. Every year about 8,500 American (that is 1 per hour) die from melanoma. Making melanoma the most serious and deadly type of skin cancer. Allowed to grow, melanoma can spread quickly to other parts of the body. There is good news, when found early melanoma is highly treatable.

Melanoma can show up on your body in different ways:

- Change in an existing mole
- New dark spot or patch on your skin
- A spot that looks like a changing freckle or age spot
- Dark streak under or around a fingernail or toenail
- Slowly growing patch of thick skin that looks like a scar



Who gets melanoma?

Anyone can get melanoma. Most people who get melanoma have light skin, but people darker skin tones also get melanoma. Other **risk factors** include:

- Use tanning beds.
- Had 5 or more blistering sunburns between 15-20 y.o.
- Failed to protect your skin from the sun.
- Fair skin, red or blond hair, and/or blue or green eyes
- Sun-sensitive skin
- 50 or more moles
- An atypical mole (mole that looks like melanoma)
- Had melanoma or another type of skin cancer
- Have a history of melanoma in your family

About 120,000 Americans will develop melanoma this year. A change is often the first sign of melanoma, so it is important to know where your moles are on your or your loved one's body. When detected early, melanomas have a high cure rate. Dermatologists encourage people of all skin colors to perform skin self-exams.

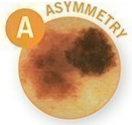
How to conduct a skin self-examination

1. Examine your body front and back in the mirror, then look at the right and left sides with your arms raised.
2. Bend your elbows and look carefully at forearms, back of upper underarms, and palms.
3. Look at the backs of your legs and feet, between your toes, and the soles of your feet.
4. Examine the back of your neck and scalp with a hand mirror or have your partner examine those areas.
5. Check your back and buttocks with a hand mirror.



What to look for: ABCDEs of melanoma

When examining your skin for melanoma, you want to look for the warning signs, which are called the ABCDEs of melanoma.



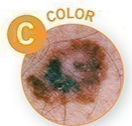
A = Asymmetry

One half is unlike the other half.



B = Border

An irregular, scalloped, or poorly defined border.



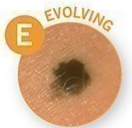
C = Color

Is varied from one area to another; has shades of tan, brown, black, white, red, or blue.



D = Diameter

Melanomas are usually greater than 6mm (the size of a pencil eraser) when diagnosed, but they can be smaller.



E = Evolving

A mole or skin lesion that looks different from the rest or is changing in size, shape or color.

If you notice a spot that is different from others, or that changes, itches or bleeds, you should make an appointment to see your board certified dermatologist.

SKIN CHECKS BY A DERMATOLOGIST

People whom have spent lots of time in the sun, have many moles or atypical moles, have a family history of skin cancer, or other risk factors for skin cancer should see a dermatologist regularly for a skin check. Some people should have this exam yearly, while others will need more frequent exams. A dermatologist will recommend the frequency that is best for each patient.

If during the skin exam a dermatologist sees a potential skin cancer, they will remove (biopsy) part of the growth in order for it to be examined under the microscope by a pathologist. A dermatologist can safely perform this procedure during your office visit.

If the skin biopsy report confirms the suspicious lesion is a skin cancer, then more treatment may be needed. Treatment includes an array of medical and surgical options and varies according to the type, location, and size of the skin cancer and the individual needs of the patient.

PREVENT Skin Cancer: Protect Yourself From the Sun

Sun exposure is the most preventable risk factor for all skin cancers, including melanoma. You can have fun in the sun and decrease your risk of skin cancer. Here's how to protect yourself from the sun:

- **Seek shade** between 10 am - 2 pm
- **Wear protective clothing**, such as a long-sleeved shirt, pants, a wide-brimmed hat, & sunglasses.
- **Apply a broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen** with an SPF 30 or higher to all exposed skin. Reapply every 2 hours, even on cloudy days, after swimming, or sweating.
- **Use extra caution near water, snow, & sand**, as they reflect the damaging rays of the sun.
- **Get vitamin D safely** through a healthy diet and/or vitamin supplements.
- **Avoid tanning beds.** UV light from sun & tanning beds can cause skin cancer & premature skin aging. If you want a tan, consider using a sunless self-tanning product, but continue to use sunscreen with it.
- **Protect children** and encourage safe sun playtime

Skin Cancer Education Guide



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