

Skin Cancer Prevention

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Skin Cancer Statistics.

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.

Conduct Self- Examinations.

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

Prevent Skin Cancer.

- 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.
- Protect children and encourage safe sun playtime.

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“People who have spent 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. 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.”