

Know **your** skin



The majority of melanomas are first detected by people themselves or by a family member.

Make sure you check your entire body as skin cancers can sometimes occur on parts of the body not usually exposed to the sun. See your GP as soon as possible if you notice any changes or have any concerns.

CHECK YOUR:

- **Head, scalp, neck and ears** - Take an extra close look around the nose, lips, ears and scalp.
- **Torso** - Check the front, back and sides of the torso.
- **Arms, hands, fingers and nails** - Remember to look at the spaces between the fingers and the beds of your fingernails.
- **Buttocks, legs and feet** - Remember to check between toes, under toenails and on the soles of feet.

SEE A DOCTOR STRAIGHT AWAY IF YOU NOTICE:

- **A skin spot** that is different from other spots around it.
- **A mole or freckle** that has changed in size, shape or colour.
- **A new spot** that has changed over weeks or months in size, shape or colour.
- **An inflamed sore** that has not healed within three weeks.

5 ways to protect yourself from skin cancer:



Slip on protective clothing

Use clothing to cover as much skin as possible.



Slap on SPF 30+ sunscreen

Make sure it's broad spectrum and water-resistant.



Slap on a hat

Wear a hat that covers your face, head, neck and ears.



Seek shade

Make use of trees or built shade or bring your own.



Slide on some sunglasses

Close fitting wrap-around styles offer best protection (AS 1067).

Be SunSmart when UV levels reach 3 and above!

Cancer Council ACT recommends a **combination** of the 5 sun protection measures when UV levels reach **3 and above**. In Canberra sun protection is recommended for part or most of each day between August and May. Outdoor experiences should be minimised if possible between 11am and 3pm during the daylight saving period of the year.

To know when sun protection is recommended each day in Canberra view the daily SunSmart UV Alert at www.bom.gov.au



a simple check could **SAVE YOUR LIFE**

Know your skin

We all should be aware of what is normal for our skin, especially as we get older. If you notice any changes or have any concerns you should see your doctor as soon as possible. People who have fair skin and hair; blue or green eyes; lots of moles or freckles; suffered sunburn as a child; used solariums; have a personal or family history of skin cancer or who spend a lot of time or work outdoors have a **higher risk** of developing skin cancer and need to take **extra care** to protect and know their skin.

There are 3 main types of **SKIN CANCER**

Basal Cell Carcinoma (BCC)



Grows slowly over months or years. Look for small, round or flattened spots that are red, pale or pearly in colour. Some are scaly like a patch of eczema. May become ulcerated, bleed and fail to heal.

Squamous Cell Carcinoma (SCC)



Grows over months and may spread if not treated. Look for scaly red areas that may bleed easily, ulcers or non-healing sores that are often painful, especially when touched. Often found on lips, ears, scalp, backs of the hands and lower legs.

HARMLESS SPOTS

Seborrhoeic Keratoses ('Senile warts')

Common non-cancerous spots sometimes confused with melanomas. Raised warty-looking brown or black lesions with well defined borders.



WARNING SIGNS

Dysplastic Naevi ('Atypical moles')

Odd shaped moles that indicate a greater risk of developing melanoma. Usually 5 - 10mm wide with uneven colouring.



Solar Keratoses ('Sunspots')

Generally hard, red, scaly spots on sun exposed areas of the skin. Most commonly found on the head, neck and on the back of the hands. Is a warning sign that the skin has been damaged and that skin cancers, in particular squamous cell carcinoma, may develop over time.



Your skin spots may vary from the examples shown. See your doctor if you notice any changes.

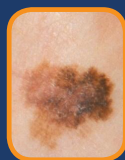
Melanoma

Accounts for 1-2 per cent of skin cancers. It is the most dangerous and aggressive form of skin cancer. If left untreated can spread to other parts of the body and can be fatal. Grows quickly over weeks to months.

Can appear as a new or existing spot, freckle or mole that changes in colour, size or shape. Can grow anywhere on the body not just areas exposed to the sun. Occurs most frequently on the upper back in males and on the lower leg in females.

Sometimes, melanoma can also appear as a lump, may have little or no brown pigment, as a reddish patch, or like a blood blister.

Use the **ABCD** of melanoma detection to check for the following:



ASYMMETRY

If the spot or lesion is divided in half the two halves are not a mirror image.



BORDER

A spot with a spreading or irregular edge.



COLOUR

A spot with a number of different colours through it.



DIAMETER

A spot that is growing and changing in diameter or size.

For more information call the **Cancer Council Helpline** on **13 11 20** or visit **www.actcancer.org**

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Cancer Council
Helpline
131120