



Skin Cancer: Know the Signs

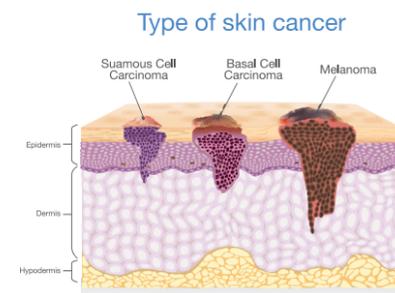
Did you know that doctors recommend checking your skin regularly? Our moles, blemishes, freckles, and other marks are unique. They can change over time, from aging or from seasonal variation, but also from skin cancer. How can you tell when you should see your doctor?

Learn your skin patterns. Skin self-exams work best in a well-lit room before a full-length mirror. Use a hand-held mirror for hard-to-see places like the backs of your thighs. Examine all areas, including your palms and soles, scalp, ears, nails, and back.

Tell your doctor about any spots on your skin that are new or changing in size, shape, or color, or if you find any unusual sores, lumps, blemishes, or markings. Changes in how your skin looks or

feels could be a cancer warning sign. Signs include skin that is red, swollen, scaly, or crusty, that feels itchy, tender, or painful, or that is oozing and bleeding.

Key warning signs for basal cell and squamous cell carcinomas include a new growth, a spot or bump that grows larger, or a sore that doesn't heal within a few weeks. Key warning signs for melanomas also include mole changes. Sometimes even doctors can't tell the difference between melanoma and an ordinary mole, another good reason to learn your skin and to be aware of any changes.



Main Types of Skin Cancers

Basal cell carcinoma accounts for about 80% of non-melanomas.

Squamous cell carcinoma accounts for about 20% of non-melanomas.

Melanoma, though rare, is much more likely to grow and spread if left untreated.

Did You Know?

Exposure to certain chemicals (like arsenic) can increase your risk of skin cancer.

Radiation exposure, especially for children who received radiation treatment, can increase the risk of skin cancer.

Additional Skin Cancer Risk Factors

1. Exposure to ultra-violet (UV) rays from sun and from tanning beds
2. Light-colored skin
3. Previous skin cancer
4. Long-term or severe skin inflammation or injury.



Moles: Benign, or Melanoma?

When examining moles, use the **ABCDE** rule:

A=Asymmetry: One half of a mole or birthmark does not match the other.

B=Border: Edges are irregular, ragged, notched, or blurred.

C=Color: Color is not the same all over and may include different shades of brown or black, or may have patches of pink, red, white, or blue.

D=Diameter: Spot is larger than 6 millimeters across (about pencil eraser width).

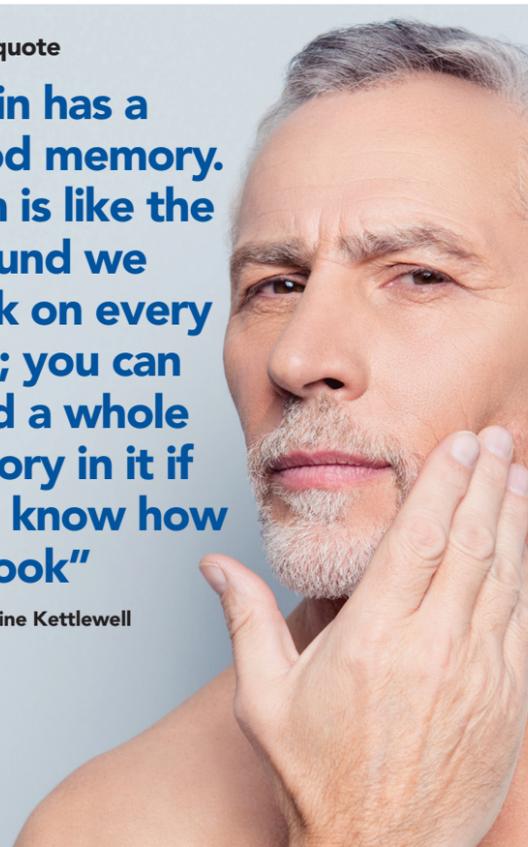
E=Evolving: The mole's size, shape, or color changes.

Also check to see if a spot looks different from all the other spots on your skin. If you see something that doesn't look right or that causes you concern, tell your doctor.

quick quote

"Skin has a good memory. Skin is like the ground we walk on every day; you can read a whole history in it if you know how to look"

— Caroline Kettlewell



by the numbers

91,270

The estimated number of melanoma cases that will be diagnosed in the U.S. in 2018

>3 million

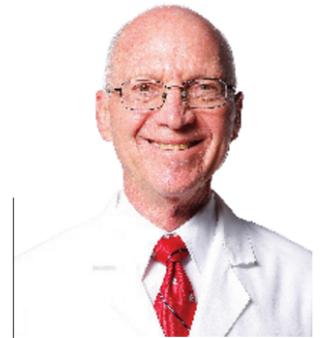
The estimated number of non-melanoma skin cancers diagnosed in the U.S. each year

30

Minimum recommended SPF strength for sunscreen

92%

5-year survival rate among all people with melanoma of the skin, from the time of initial diagnosis



Herman Flink, MD
Radiation Oncologist at RBOI

Protect Yourself with Sunscreen

Most of us are aware of the cause of skin cancer: Excess sun exposure. The important thing to note is the sun exposure in our youth and subsequent few decades which leads to the skin cancers that develop in our 50s, 60s, and 70s. Avoiding sun exposure at any age is worthwhile, but when we are with our grandchildren, urge either minimal Sun exposure or the liberal use of sunscreen, SPF 30 or more.



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