

Checking Your Skin for Cancer

Remember: Skin cancers can look different. If you notice any skin change that concerns you, speak to your doctor promptly.



Patient Information Leaflet

Regular self-checks of your skin can help spot potential skin cancers early, when treatment is simpler and outcomes are better. Aim to examine your skin once a month. Look out for any unusual changes, especially those that are new, growing, or changing.



What to Look For

- New lumps, bumps, sores, or patches on your skin.
- Moles or marks that change in shape, size, colour, or texture.
- Persistent sores that don't heal.
- Areas that itch, hurt, or bleed without reason.



How to Check Your Skin

- Choose a warm, well-lit space. You may need a full-length mirror, a hand mirror, a comb, a tape measure or ruler, and a digital camera or phone to track changes.
- Check your skin from head to toe, using mirrors for hard-to-see spots. Ask someone you trust to help.



Step-by-Step Self-Examination

- **Scalp and Face:** Use a comb to part your hair and check your entire scalp. Don't forget behind the ears and the back of your neck.
- **Upper Body:** Examine your shoulders, chest, and abdomen. Look under breasts and in the groin area.
- **Arms and Hands:** Check both sides of your hands, between fingers, and under nails. Look along your arms and under armpits.
- **Back:** Use mirrors or ask someone to help. Start from the top and work down to your lower back and buttocks.
- **Legs and Feet:** Look at the front, sides, and back of your legs. Check soles, between toes, and toenails.



ABCDE Rule for Melanoma

- A Asymmetry:** One half looks different from the other.
- B Border:** Irregular or blurred edges.
- C Colour:** Uneven shades or unusual colours.
- D Diameter:** Any mole growing in size over weeks to months.
- E Expert:** When in doubt, see your GP or a dermatologist.