

Did You Know?

- One in five Americans will be diagnosed with skin cancer in their lifetime; it's the most common type of cancer.
- Risk factors for skin cancer include having lots of moles on your body, excessive sun exposure, and having fair skin.
- Melanoma, the deadliest type of skin cancer, is one type of cancer that is becoming more common in the United States.
- Early detection of unusual (atypical) moles is one way to protect yourself from skin cancer.
- You should conduct monthly skin self-examinations, which this pamphlet will help you do. You should also have one clinical skin examination every year.
- Dysplastic nevi is the medical term for unusual (atypical) moles. Knowing how to spot these unusual moles will help you find moles that require the attention of a doctor.
- This pamphlet will help you conduct thorough skin self-examinations and identify potentially dangerous moles.

How to Conduct a Skin Self-Examination at Home

1 Examine the front and back of your body in a mirror, then your right and left sides with your arms raised.



2 Bend your elbows and look carefully at your forearms, the back of your upper arms, and palms of your hands.



3 Then look at the backs of your legs and feet, the spaces between your toes, and soles of your feet.



4 Examine the back of your neck and top of your head (including in between your hair); sometimes using a hand mirror helps.



5 Finally, check your back and buttocks in a mirror; again, sometimes a hand mirror helps.

How to Help Yourself Prevent Skin Cancer



Skin Self-Examinations & Identifying At-Risk Moles

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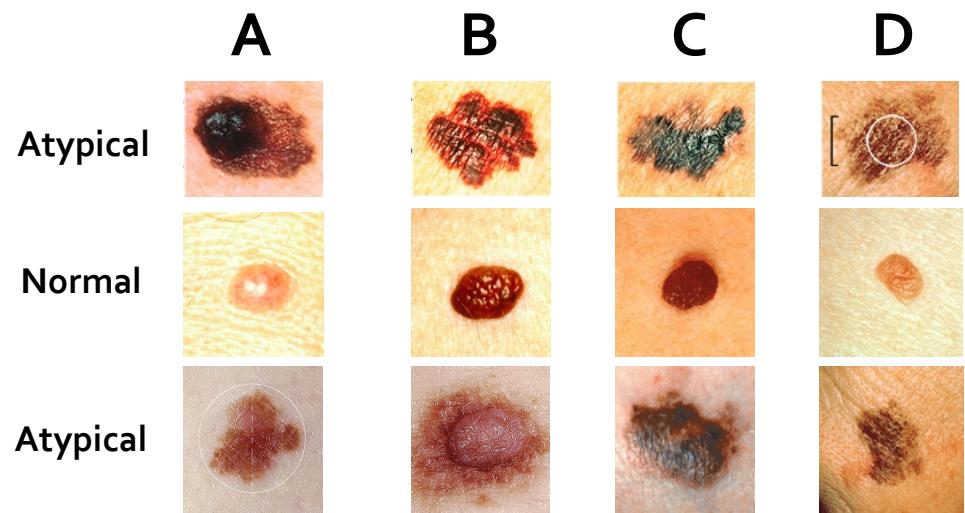


How to Identify Atypical Moles and Melanoma

Doctors and researchers suggest two ways to determine if a mole is unusual (atypical) and should be examined by a doctor. The first method is “knowing your ABCDEs,” which requires you to examine each mole individually. The other method focuses on finding “the ugly duckling,” or unusual mole compared to other moles on your body.

Knowing Your ABCDEs

Knowing your ABCDEs is one effective way to find potentially harmful (atypical) moles on your body. If you find a mole or spot during a skin self-examination, does it have any of the following qualities? Is it **A**symmetrical? Have uneven **B**orders? Have more than three **C**olors? Have a **D**iameter (across the mole) of more than 1/4 inch? Has it **E**volved (changed) over time? If you answer yes to any of these questions, you should talk to your doctor.



These pictures represent atypical (unusual) and normal moles that you might find on your body. If you find atypical moles on your body, make sure to contact your doctor.

Finding the Ugly Duckling

The ugly duckling method is another effective way to find potentially harmful (atypical) moles on your body. It requires that you look for moles that look strange compared to any other moles on your body. When you do a skin self-examination, do you see any moles or strange skin spots that are different from the other moles on your body? **If yes, you may have found the “ugly duckling,”** and you should talk to your doctor.

