



INFORMATION GUIDE

WHAT TO EXPECT OF A FULL SKIN CHECK

Well done you have taken the first step to looking after your skin. A skin check can help detect skin cancer at an early stage and can teach you how to detect areas of concern on your own skin.

It is advised to get a full skin check from a doctor experienced in skin cancer. It is beneficial if they have training in the use of dermoscopy, as this is a more sensitive device for early detection of melanoma. Be sure to ask this question when booking your appointment. Whether you have decided to go to a GP or a dermatologist, a full body skin check should consist of the following;

- A consent to conduct a full skin examination
- A full review of your medical history assessing any risk factors you have of getting melanoma.
- Privacy should be protected – some doctors prefer you to strip down to your bra and undies, whilst others will ask you to reveal your skin a part at a time. Either way is fine. You may ask for a chaperone.
- There should be a systematic review of your skin from head to toe.
- The doctor should start from the top of your head including the scalp, behind the ears, sides of the nose and neck. Working down to examine arms, between the fingers, trunk, back, legs and toes, and soles of the feet.
- Be sure to highlight any areas of concern to your doctor
- Your breasts and genitals are not normally examined unless you have concerns about them. You should have a chaperone during this examination if required.
- At the end of the examination the doctor will discuss with you any concerns and further treatment requirements of any abnormal areas.
- Frequently a biopsy is required to confirm a diagnosis. Some investigations and treatments may be performed that day, but others may require a further appointment.
- If everything is normal they will then recommend a time frame for your next skin check, depending on your skin type, age and risk factors.
- Regular self-skin examination is important, and the doctor can provide you with information on how to do this and what to look out for.

Always go back to your Doctor in between skin checks if you notice anything different or changing.

REMEMBER EARLY DETECTION SAVES LIVES



KNOW THE SKIN YOU ARE IN

Undertaking regular 'self checks' of your skin is one of the most effective ways of detecting a melanoma early.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

ABCDE guide to Melanoma



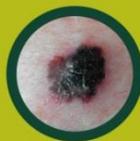
Asymmetry.

One half is different from the other half



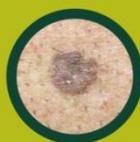
Border Irregularity.

The edges are notched, uneven or blurred



Colour is uneven.

Shades of brown, tan and black are present



Diameter is greater than 6 millimetres



Evolution.

Any change in growth; new or elevated

Have concerns? Seek advice from your doctor or skin specialist.

For more information visit www.melanoma.org.nz,
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Photos courtesy of Dr Anthony Tam

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