

MELANOMA DETECTION

Have a routine skin exam once a year or return to the office sooner if you notice any new or changing lesions. Performing regular self-examinations help people recognize the early warning signs of melanoma. Dermatologists recommend that everyone performs regular self-examinations. When examining your moles, remember the ABCDE's of Melanoma Detection:

THE ABCDE'S

- A stands for **Asymmetry**: one half unlike the other
- B stands for **Border**: irregular, scalloped, or poorly defined border
- C stands for **Color**: varied from one area to another, shades of tan, brown and black, sometimes red, with blue coloring
- D stands for **Diameter**: melanomas are usually greater than 6 mm in size (the size of a pencil eraser) when diagnosed, but can be smaller
- E stands for **Evolving**: a mole or skin lesions that look different from the rest or is changing in size, shape, or color

PREVENTION

Sun exposure is the most preventable risk factor for all skin cancers, including melanoma. You can have fun in the sun and decrease your risk of skin cancer. Here's how to be sun smart:

- Generously apply a water-resistant sunscreen with a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of at least 30 that provides broad spectrum protection from both ultraviolet rays (UVA/UVB) to all exposed skin, reapplying every 1-2 hours.
- Wear protective clothing, such as a long-sleeve shirt, pants, wide-brimmed hats, and sunglasses whenever possible.
- Seek shade whenever possible, and remember that the sun's rays are strongest between 10 AM and 4 PM
- Use extra caution near water, snow, and sand as they can reflect the damaging rays of the sun and increase your chance of sunburn.
- Get vitamin D safely through a healthy diet that includes vitamin D supplements. Do not seek the sun and avoid tanning beds. Ultraviolet light from the sun and tanning beds can cause skin cancer and wrinkling. If you want to look tanned, consider using a sunless self-tanner product or spray tan, but continue to use sunscreen with it.
- It is important to see your eye doctor, dentist, and OB/GYN since skin cancer can occur in non-sun exposed areas such as the palms, soles of your feet, nails, eyes, mouth, and genital areas.