

# ABCDEs OF MELANOMA

A GUIDE TO SPOTTING MELANOMA



These basic guidelines are used by many dermatologists to help identify melanoma, the deadliest form of skin cancer.

Catching melanoma early could mean the difference between life and a life-threatening cancer. Knowing what to look for and performing regular self-skin exams may help you become more aware of unusual spots that should be brought to the attention of a dermatologist.

If you notice an unusual spot or a spot that has one or more of these characteristics, make an appointment with a dermatologist — preferably one who has experience with melanoma.

**A** **ASYMMETRICAL SHAPE:** Melanoma lesions are often irregular, or not symmetrical, in shape. Benign moles are usually symmetrical.



**B** **BORDER:** Typically, non-cancerous moles have smooth, even borders. Melanoma lesions usually have irregular borders that are difficult to define.



**C** **COLOR:** The presence of more than one color (blue, black, brown, tan, etc.) or the uneven distribution of color can sometimes be a warning sign of melanoma. Benign moles are usually a single shade of brown or tan.



**D** **DIAMETER:** Melanoma lesions are often greater than 6 millimeters in diameter (about the size of a pencil eraser).



**E** **EVOLUTION (OR CHANGE):** The evolution of your mole(s) has become the most important factor to consider when it comes to diagnosing a melanoma. Knowing what is normal for YOU could save your life.



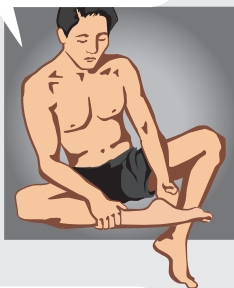
\*It is important to note that not all melanomas fall within these parameters.

# SELF SCREENING GUIDE

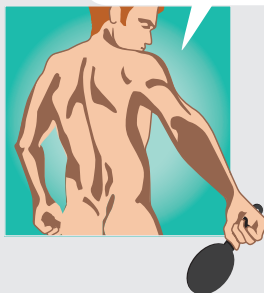
Be on the lookout for:

- Moles that begin to itch or bleed
- A spot that doesn't heal
- A dark spot under the toenail or fingernail
- A flat, red spot that is rough, dry or scaly
- A spot that becomes painful or tender

Check hands, nails, soles of the feet and between the fingers and toes.



Check the front and back of your legs. Use a mirror to help you see your shoulders, back, buttocks and genitals.



Check your head, face, ears and the back of your neck. A blow dryer may help you look at your scalp.



Check your abdomen, arms, underarms and chest, including under your breasts.



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