

Skin CHECK



It is important to understand what will help prevent skin cancer and what might actually increase your risk, according to Caliber I.D., a company that makes diagnostic lab instruments.

Fact: All skin types and ethnic groups can develop skin cancer. While it is true that Caucasians have a greater risk of skin-related cancer, everyone should protect their skin against the sun's harmful rays.

Although fair-skinned people can often easily see stage 1 melanoma (dark spots, changing or new moles) and other cancers, darker skin makes catching it in the early stages more unlikely. Also, darker-skinned people tend to develop a more lethal type of melanoma that develops on the soles of the feet, between the toes, and on the palms of the hands.



Let your health care provider know if you have any of these signs.

Basal cell and squamous cell cancers seldom spread to other parts of the body. Here's what to look for:



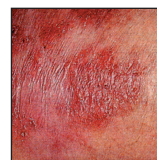
Small, smooth, shiny, pale or waxy lump



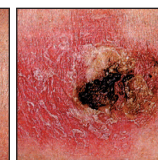
Firm red lump



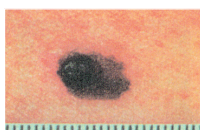
Lump that bleeds or develops a crust



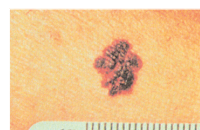
A flat, red spot that is rough, dry or scaly and may become itchy or tender



Melanoma can spread to other parts of the body and be fatal if not treated early. Often, the first sign is a change in the size, shape, or color of an existing mole. It also may appear as a new, abnormal, or "ugly looking" mole. Learn the ABCD and E's that can help you detect it early.



Asymmetry – The shape of one half does not match the other.



Border – The edges are ragged, notched, or blurred.



Color – The color is uneven. Shades of black, brown, or tan and areas of gray, red, or blue may be seen.



Diameter – The size changes and is often bigger than a pencil eraser.

Evolving lesion – Surface bleeding or a change in the size, shape, shades of color or symptoms occurs.