



# ADULT

# HEALTH BULLETIN



## JUNE 2019

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<http://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/content/health-bulletins>

### THIS MONTH'S TOPIC:

## PROTECTION AGAINST SKIN CANCER



**S**kin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the United States. Skin cancer is the abnormal growth of skin cells, which most often develops after the skin has been exposed to the sun. Skin cancer can develop on areas like your scalp, face, lips, ears, neck, chest, arms, hands, and legs. Sometimes skin cancer forms on other places that rarely see the sun, such as the palms of your hands or soles of your feet. Skin cancer affects all people, no matter what skin tone.

### Symptoms

The most common sign of skin cancer is a change in your skin. As soon as you notice a change

Continued on the back



# The sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays can reach your skin on a cloudy day just as much as they do on sunny days.

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in your skin, such as a new growth, a sore that does not heal, or a change in an old growth, talk to your doctor. Different types of skin cancers look different, but a good way to remember and test the signs of skin cancer is as simple as the A-B-C-D-Es.

**A – Asymmetrical.** Do you have a mole or a spot that has an irregular shape or is lopsided?

**B – Border.** Do you have a mole or a spot with an uneven border?

**C – Color.** Do you have a mole or spot with irregular coloring?

**D – Diameter.** Do you have a mole or spot that is larger than the size of a pea?

**E – Evolving.** Do you have a mole or spot that has changed over the past weeks or months?

If you answer yes to any of these questions, you need to talk to your doctor. Not all skin changes are caused by skin cancer, but it is best to let your doctor investigate to determine the cause.

## Risk factors

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, anyone can get skin cancer, but you are at a higher risk if you have one or more of these characteristics:

- A lighter skin color.
- Skin that burns, freckles, reddens easily, or becomes painful in the sun.
- Blue or green eyes.
- Blond or red hair.
- Certain types and a large number of moles.
- A family history of skin cancer.
- A personal history of skin cancer.

## Protecting yourself is worth it

It is important to protect yourself from the sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation year-round. The UV rays can reach your skin on a cloudy day just as much as they do on sunny days. The CDC recommends protecting yourself from UV rays year-round by:



- Avoiding indoor tanning beds.
- Using sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or higher year-round. Look for protection of both UVA and UVB.
- Staying in the shade when possible.
- Wearing clothing that covers your arms and legs.
- Wearing a hat with a wide brim to shade your face, head, ears, and neck.
- Wearing sunglasses that wrap around and block both UVA and UVB rays.
- Being aware of sun-sensitizing medications.
- Checking your skin regularly and reporting changes to your doctor.

## RESOURCES

- <https://www.cancer.org/cancer/skin-cancer.html>
- <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/skin-cancer/symptoms-causes/syc-20377605>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/skin>
- <https://mrisktool.cancer.gov>
- [https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/skin/basic\\_info/risk\\_factors.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/skin/basic_info/risk_factors.htm)

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