

## SKIN CANCER - SELF EXAMINATION

Self examination of the skin aids in the recognition of any new or evolving lesions. Consult your doctor if changes are noticed.

1. Examine your body front and back in the mirror, then right and left sides, arms raised.
2. Bend the elbows and look carefully at forearms and upper arms and palms.
3. Look at the backs of the legs and feet, spaces between toes and the soles.
4. Examine the back of the neck and the scalp with a hand mirror. Part the hair for a closer look at the scalp.
5. Finally, check the back and buttocks with a hand mirror.



"Specialising in the microscopic diagnosis of skin cancer"  
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## PATIENT INFORMATION

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# PATIENT INFORMATION



## BASAL CELL CARCINOMA

**BASAL CELL CARCINOMA (BCC)** is the most common form of skin cancer. It occurs most frequently on sun-exposed regions of the body. Although this skin cancer rarely spreads (metastasizes) to other organs of the body, it can cause destruction of surrounding tissue. Thus, early detection and treatment are essential.



Most basal cell carcinomas are caused by chronic sun exposure, especially in people with fair skin, light hair and blue, green or grey eyes. In a few instances, there are other contributing factors such as burns, exposure to radiation, arsenical intoxication or chronic dermatitis.

Basal cell carcinoma may have several different appearances on your skin. Some warning signs that may indicate basal cell carcinoma are an open sore, a reddish patch, a growth with an elevated border and a central indentation, a bump or nodule and a scar-like area.

## HOW CAN YOU PROTECT YOURSELF?

Because chronic overexposure to sunlight is the leading cause of basal cell carcinoma, sun avoidance, especially during peak sunlight hours of 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., is an important preventative measure to help reduce the risk of developing this skin cancer.

Limit skin exposure to the sun's harmful ultraviolet rays by wearing sunglasses, broad-brimmed hats and protective, tightly woven clothing. Use a broad-spectrum sunscreen rated SPF-30+ on all exposed skin, including the lips, even on cloudy days. Reapply sunscreen frequently. Avoid tanning parlors and artificial tanning devices.

Inspect your entire body regularly for any skin changes, especially those already mentioned, and routinely visit your physician for a skin examination.

### Don't become a statistic

**BCC is the most common form of skin cancer and of all cancers, affecting nearly 100,000 Australians each year. Men are affected more often than women. BCC's generally tend to occur in older individuals, although they may occur in young adults and even children. People with one BCC have a greater chance of developing others.**

## TREATMENT OPTIONS

After sections of tissue from a biopsy of your skin are assessed under a microscope by a dermatopathologist and determined to be basal cell carcinoma, your doctor will discuss several treatment options. Your doctor's choice of therapy depends on the size, location and subtype of basal cell carcinoma. Your age and general health are also taken into consideration. The more common treatment options include excisional surgery, cryosurgery (freezing the lesion with liquid nitrogen), topical chemotherapy creams, or photodynamic therapy. Your doctor will help you decide which option is best for you.



**healthy skin saves lives**