

WHAT HAPPENS DURING A SKIN CHECK?

Prepare your skin! Please ensure your skin is clean and free from anything that might obscure the doctor's view of spots. This includes: fake tan, make-up including lipstick/foundation powder & nail polish

A one spot skin check can take up to 5 minutes. If you have only one spot to check, please ask the Reception to book you a five minutes appointment. This is useful for checking a new mole or a change in an existing mole. This five minutes appointment is usually bulk-billed.

However, it is recommended that everyone should have a full skin check. This is usually a 15 minutes appointment that is dictated only for a skin check. If you have multiple moles, you might need to book for 30 minutes appointment for a skin check. This is especially useful when digital photographs need to be used to monitor your moles over time. Also, your Doctor will advise you how often you should have a skin check.

During the visit, the doctor will ask you questions about your general health, previous sun burns, previous skin cancers and treatment, family history of skin cancers. Make sure you tell the doctor about any spots or moles you have which are **Sore, Changing, Abnormal or New**.

What equipment does the doctor use?

Your doctor is a "Qualified Dermatoscopist" who will use a dermatoscope to have a close up / magnified look at any spots of concern. A dermatoscope is a bit like a torch with a magnifying glass attached to the end. Using a dermatoscope is painless. Sometimes the doctor may take a photograph of a spot or mole so it can be monitored over time for any changes in appearance. However, your Doctor is also a Qualified RACGP Fellow GP who uses a holistic approach for your healthcare. Please inform your Doctor if you are taking any blood thinner medications, immunosuppressant medications including steroids, if you have a pacemaker, previous skin problem like dermatitis/eczema and psoriasis, previous joint replacement, cochlear implant or current or previous valvular heart disease or surgery. Also if you have any allergies, sensitivities to plasters, dressings, tapes, medications including local anesthesia & needle phobia. This is especially if you going to have a procedure like excision or punch biopsy for your skin lesion/cancer.

Do I have to get undressed?

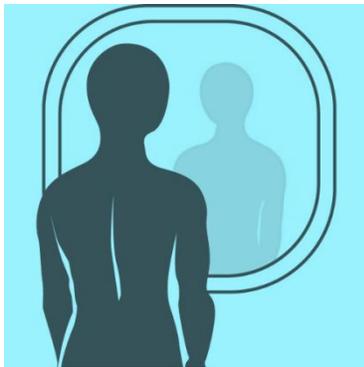
Yes – down to your underwear/Bra. You have the option to wear a gown and to be chaperoned if you wish. Private areas are not examined routinely unless you request it: for example if you have a mole there that needs to be examined.

WHAT SHOULD I KNOW ABOUT SKIN CANCER?

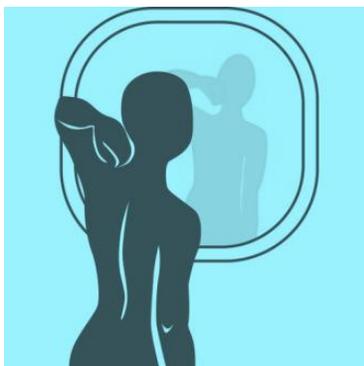
- Australia and New Zealand have the highest incidence of skin cancer in the world
- Skin cancers account for around 80% of all newly diagnosed cancers

- More than 90% of skin cancers are caused by exposure to the sun
- Melanoma is the most common life threatening cancer in the 15 to 44 year age group
- Melanoma is the third most common life threatening cancer in both men & women overall
- Early detection and treatment by a qualified Doctor can cures most of skin cancers and reduce the risk of recurrence.
- Remember that Skin Cancers are not always dark, they can be pink or even skin colored!
- Any new mole or a change in an existing mole (including change in color, asymmetry, irritation, tenderness, pain, bleeding, growing in size) needs to be check ASAP. Even pigmentation and or distortion of the nails, pigmentation in the lips, inside the mouth, white of the eye, breasts and genital area better to be checked. The point of all of this is to detect skin cancer early to increase the chance of cure. Remember that some skin cancers treatment can be difficult and complex if they are discovered late: Advanced Melanomas and Squamous Skin Cancers can be fatal.
- Skin self examination should be done often enough to become a habit, but not so often as to feel like a bother. For most people an interval of **one to three months** is ideal.

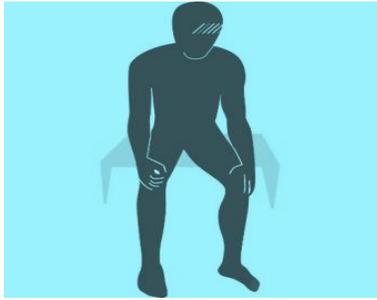
Face the mirror



Check your face, ears, neck, chest, and belly. Women will need to lift their breasts to check the skin underneath.



Check your underarm areas, both sides of your arms, the tops and palms of your hands, in between your fingers, and under your fingernails.



Check the front of your thighs, shins, tops of your feet, in between your toes, and under your toenails.



Now use a hand mirror to look at the bottoms of your feet, your calves, and the backs of your thighs, first checking one leg and then the other.



Use the hand mirror to check your buttocks, genital area, lower and upper back, and the back of your neck and ears. Or it may be easier to look at your back in the wall mirror using a hand mirror.



Use a comb or hair dryer to part your hair so that you can check your scalp.

The best time to do a skin self-exam is after a bath or shower. Check any moles, blemishes, or birthmarks from the top of your head to your toes. If you look at your skin regularly, you will know what's normal for you.