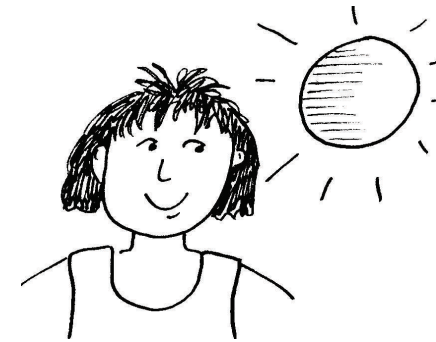


Skin Cancer



The Skin

The skin is a very important part of our body. It protects;

- against infections
- other organs of the body from getting hurt.

The skin also helps to control our body temperature.



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What is Skin Cancer?



Cancer is an illness which causes your body to change. These changes will mean that your body will not work as well as before.



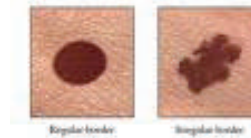
One of the main causes of skin cancer is harmful rays from the sun or sun beds.



If you have blue eyes, fair or red hair, and fair skin that burns easily, you're more at risk.



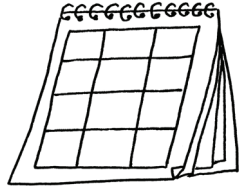
Skin cancer is most likely to affect the skin on your back, chest and legs.



The most common symptom is a strange looking mole with an irregular border.



The test for skin cancer is a biopsy and the treatment is surgery to remove the mole.



After your treatment has finished, you will need regular appointments with the doctor to check that the cancer has not come back.



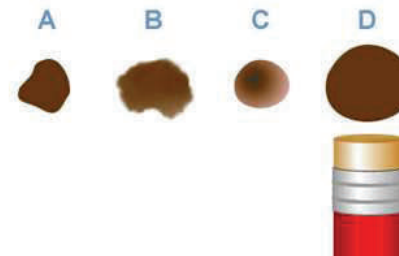
If you notice any changes or lumps from where you had the operation, this will need to be checked.



It is also important that you check and look after yourself. By checking your moles and protecting yourself in the sun.



You may have a higher risk of getting skin cancer if you have lots of strange moles.



An abnormal mole is: bigger than 6mm, irregular shape or fuzzy edges. May have different shades of the colours brown, black, pink or a bluish tint.

Normal moles can be raised up from the skin and may sometimes be hairy so don't worry if yours are like this. Some moles can get itchy, crusty or start bleeding. These are less common signs of cancer but it is important to let your doctor know if you have them.



If you are worried about a mole, make an appointment with a doctor or ask someone to help you.



The wound is closed up using stitches which can come out after 2 weeks.



You may be asked to go and see a dermatologist. They will look at your mole with a special scanner called a dermascope.



The mole is then looked at under a microscope to see if it contains cancer.

The doctor may recommend that you have the mole removed. This is a small operation and can be done while you are awake or asleep.



If it does then you will need another operation to make sure that all the cancer cells have been taken away.