

Moles: Skin Self Check

Anyone can get skin cancer. Your provider may advise doing a monthly skin check as an important way to spot early signs of skin cancer. If found early, skin cancer can be treated. Regular skin checks can help you track any changes in your skin.

Getting started

Mole checks are important. Here are some ways you might consider checking your skin. One of the easiest ways is to take photos of your moles. These photos can be shared with your health care provider.

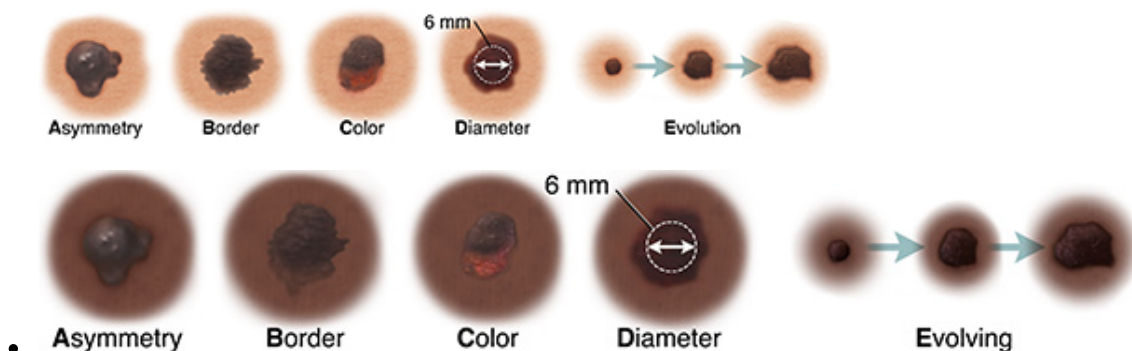
Another way to check your skin for changes is by using a mole chart. Each month, check your body for any spots, such as freckles, age spots, and moles. Use this sheet to help you by doing the following:

1. Number each spot you find on the images below.
2. Record the details for each spot and the date on the chart at the bottom of the page.
3. Keep all of your completed charts. This will help you track any changes in your skin over time.

What to look for

When doing a skin check, be sure to use the ABCDEs of melanoma, a type of skin cancer. This means checking spots and moles for the following:

- **Asymmetry.** One half of the mole is not like the other half.
- **Border.** The edges are not smooth, but ragged, notched, or blurred.
- **Color.** Color varies from one part of the mole to another and may be tan, brown, or black. In some cases, the color can be white, red, or blue.
- **Diameter.** The mole is larger than 6 mm (size of a pencil eraser).
- **Evolving.** The mole is getting larger or changing its shape or color.



How to check

Stand before a full-length mirror and check all parts of your body. Have a family member or friend check for spots on your back or other areas you can't see. Or use a hand mirror to check hard-to-see areas such as your back, buttocks, back of the neck, and scalp. To get a better look when checking your scalp, part your hair.

Taking photos of your moles can also be very helpful. Looking at photos over time can help you find new moles. It can also help you find changes in existing moles. And it can ease any worries if you don't see any changes over time.

When to call your health care provider

Call your health care provider if any of your moles:

- Hurt.
- Itch.
- Ooze.
- Bleed.
- Thicken.
- Become crusty.
- Show any of the ABCDEs of melanoma.

Mole check chart

You can use this chart to keep track of your moles.

Date	Mole #	Asymmetry:	Border of mole	Color of mole	Diameter of mole	Evolving: How has mole changed?
		What is the mole's shape?				

You can also download a printable body mole map to help with your mole check. See the [American Academy of Dermatology website](#).