

Title:

How To Find Out If You Have Skin Cancer

Word Count:

531

Summary:

The process of detecting skin cancer, the most common form of cancer in the United States, can be practiced with a monthly self examination combined with a yearly visit to your doctor. Early detection is key because, if diagnosed soon enough, skin cancer is almost always curable.

There are three main types of skin cancer, all of which are visible if you know what to look for. Melanoma, one of the main forms of skin cancer, is the deadliest. This disease is the most diffic...

Keywords:

skin cancer, cancer, disease

Article Body:

The process of detecting skin cancer, the most common form of cancer in the United States, can be practiced with a monthly self examination combined with a yearly visit to your doctor. Early detection is key because, if diagnosed soon enough, skin cancer is almost always curable.

There are three main types of skin cancer, all of which are visible if you know what to look for. Melanoma, one of the main forms of skin cancer, is the deadliest. This disease is the most difficult to stop after it has spread throughout the body, which is why early detection and treatment are crucial. Skin cancer, of any kind, can usually be treated with success in it's early stages.

As individuals, everyone has freckles, birthmarks and moles. These are a part of you and you are used to seeing them, but you may not notice slight changes right away and that's what you need to be watching for. Any change in a mole's shape, edges, size or color should be checked by a physician. If a mole becomes larger than that of a pencil eraser or if it's color is multiple shades of brown rather than a solid color, these are both potential warning signs of skin cancer. A mole's border should be well defined and, if that is no longer the case, notify your doctor. In addition, any sore that will not heal or a mole that grows larger at a rapid speed should be tested immediately.

Deciding to seek medical attention is difficult. For this reason, it's best to choose a physician that you are comfortable with, such as a family doctor. He/she can examine your skin and refer you to a dermatologist if needed. The presence of skin cancer is determined by removing all, or part, of the questionable area and testing it with a microscope. Surgery is often utilized in the removal of skin cancer and, if done in the early stages, can be a very quick process. There will likely be a scar, but the physician may be able to completely remove all cancerous cells with only a very small incision.

If the cancer has spread, or is very large in the defined area, additional surgery may be required. In that case, chemotherapy or radiation treatments may be ordered to ensure the cancer is completely removed. Your physician will be able to answer all questions that you may have and should do so without reserve. When meeting with a doctor, ask for an explanation of all treatment options, including their likelihood for success in your particular case. Deciding to seek medical attention is a big step and one that a patient must be mentally prepared for.

This article should not be construed as professional medical advice. If you, or someone that you know, is concerned about the possibility of cancer, you should seek medical attention immediately. A medical doctor can discuss various options, prevention and treatment possibilities should the presence of cancer be detected. A series of tests may be conducted in order to confirm, or rule out, any such diagnosis and can only be done by a medical doctor.