

Don't Wait to Schedule an Appointment with your Dermatologist

By Dr. Daniel Shurman

They say patience is a virtue and that good things come to those who wait. But when it comes to a suspicious looking mole, freckle, or spot on your body, waiting can be detrimental to your health. May is skin cancer awareness month. Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the United States. Over 5 million cases are diagnosed each year, so there is no better time to remind you to take the health of your skin very seriously.

What is skin cancer?

Skin cancer is an abnormal growth of skin cells. Usually, your skin cells will die, flake off, and be replaced by new cells. When the reproduction of new skin cells goes wrong, it can create growth of abnormal cells. These abnormal cells may be noncancerous, or cancerous. The noncancerous, or benign cells are typically harmless. The cancerous cells can become problematic if they are left to spread to other areas of the body.

There are three main types of skin cancer. Basal cell carcinoma and squamous cell carcinoma are often referred to as "non-melanoma skin cancer". They are the most common types of skin cancer. Melanoma, while not as common, is the more dangerous form of skin cancer.



What are the early signs of skin cancer?

Performing regular self-checks is an important way to detect suspicious spots on your skin. Basal cell carcinoma skin cancers can appear as a small waxy bump on the face, neck, and ears. It can also present as a flat pink, red, or brown spot on the arms and legs. Basal cell cancers can also look like a scar or appear crusty or bleed. Signs of squamous cell carcinoma include scaly, itchy, crusty or rough skin that may bleed. Melanoma symptoms can include a brown bump or a mole that changes shape, color or bleeds.

When should I get checked?

When caught early, skin cancer treatments have a very high success rate. Most can be cured if they are treated before the cancer has a chance to spread. If left untreated, the cancer cells can break away from the skin and travel to other parts of the body. The cancer cells can then infect other organs or lymph nodes. This process, called metastasis, is how skin cancer can potentially become life-threatening.

If you feel that you have a suspicious spot on your body, don't wait to have your skin checked by a dermatologist. The earlier the cancer is detected, the better the chances of treating the cancer successfully.

Our dedicated and passionate team at Dermatology Partners specializes in the detection and treatment of skin cancers. We have 24 locations throughout Pennsylvania and Delaware, including several locations along the Route 422 and Route 100 corridors in Exton, Pottstown, Douglassville, Oaks, King of Prussia, and Exeter. All of our offices offer next day appointments so you do not have to wait if you detect a suspicious-looking mole, freckle, or spot on your skin. To schedule your annual skin cancer screening, or to discuss a suspicious area of your skin with one of our providers, call 888.895.3376 or visit www.dermpartners.com.

Dermatology Partners has been providing quality care to the community for 10 years. We specialize in the detection and treatment of skin cancers. With 30 experienced and compassionate providers and 24 locations throughout PA and DE, we offer next day appointments to get you access to the care you need, when you need it.



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