

# Skin Cancer Prevention: Care Instructions



## Your Care Instructions

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Skin cancer is the abnormal growth of cells in the skin. It usually appears as a growth that changes in color, shape, or size. This can be a sore that does not heal or a change in a wart or a mole. Skin cancer is almost always curable when found early and treated. So it is important to see your doctor if you have any of these changes in your skin.

Skin cancer is the most common type of cancer. It often appears on areas of the body that have been exposed to the sun, such as the head, face, neck, back, chest, or shoulders.

**Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety.** Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if you are having problems. It's also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take.

## How can you care for yourself at home?

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- Wear a wide-brimmed hat and long sleeves and pants if you are going to be outdoors for a long time.
- Avoid the sun between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., which is the peak time for UV rays.
- Wear sunscreen on exposed skin. Make sure to use a broad-spectrum sunscreen that has a sun protection factor (SPF) of 30 or higher. Use it every day, even when it is cloudy.
- Do not use tanning booths or sunlamps.
- Use lip balm or cream that has sun protection factor (SPF) to protect your lips from getting sunburned.
- Wear sunglasses that block UV rays.

## When should you call for help?

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**Call your doctor now** or seek immediate medical care if:

- You have signs of infection, such as:
  - Increased pain, swelling, warmth, or redness.
  - Red streaks leading from the area.
  - Pus draining from the area.
  - A fever.

Watch closely for changes in your health, and be sure to contact your doctor if:

- You see a change in your skin, such as a growth or mole that:
  - Grows bigger. This may happen very slowly.
  - Changes color.
  - Changes shape.
  - Starts to bleed easily.
- You have swollen glands in your armpits, groin, or neck.
- You do not get better as expected.

### Where can you learn more?

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Go to <https://www.healthwise.net/patiented>

Enter **P392** in the search box to learn more about "**Skin Cancer Prevention: Care Instructions**".

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