

Some smart yet easy ways to shield yourself from skin cancer

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(HealthDay)—One in five Americans will develop skin cancer at some

point in their life, but it can be treated and cured if detected early, a dermatologist says.

"Knowing your own [skin](#) is the key to discovering skin cancer early on. See a dermatologist for a skin check if you notice a spot, mole or lump on your body that is changing, growing or bleeding," said Dr. Mark Lebwohl. He is chair of the dermatology department at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York City.

May is Skin Cancer Awareness Month and May 2 is Melanoma Monday. Melanoma is the most deadly form of skin cancer.

Lebwohl described in a school news release how to prevent and detect [skin cancer](#).

- Apply a sunblock with an SPF of 30 or higher to all exposed skin whenever you're outdoors. Do this throughout the year and even on cloudy days. Reapply about every two hours.
- Wear long-sleeved shirts, pants, a wide-brimmed hat and sunglasses.
- Never sunbathe and never use tanning beds.
- Have a doctor look for changes to your skin during annual checkups, and check your skin every month. If you have a lot of brown spots, it might be a good idea to ask about total body photography—to create a photographic record of your moles and monitor for changes.

You should also follow the ABCDEs, Lebwohl added, and tell your doctor if you see any of the following in your moles:

- Asymmetry—where one side of a mole is different from the other.
- Borders that are irregular, scalloped or poorly defined.

- Color that varies from one area to another, with shades of tan and brown, black and sometimes white, red or blue.
- Diameters that are the size of a pencil eraser (6 millimeters) or larger. However, some melanomas can be smaller, Lebwohl noted.
- Evolving, which means a mole or other skin feature looks different from the rest or is changing in size, shape and color.

More information: The U.S. National Cancer Institute has more on [skin cancer prevention](#).

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