



**FIREFIGHTERS ARE DIAGNOSED WITH MELANOMA AT A GREATER RATE
THAN THE GENERAL US POPULATION.**

Checking Your Skin for Signs of Cancer



How to do a Skin Check

Check your skin once a month. Skin checks are best done in front of a full-length mirror. A handheld mirror is also helpful. Make sure the room is well lit. You may need a someone to check your back and scalp.

Face the Mirror.

- Check your face, ears, neck, chest, and belly. Women will need to lift their breasts to check underneath.
- Check the skin under your arms, both sides of your arms, and the tops and palms of your hands. Also check between your fingers and under your fingernails.

Sit Down.

- Check the front of your legs, tops of your feet, in between your toes, and under your toenails.
- Use a hand mirror to look at the bottoms of your feet and the backs of your legs.
- Use the hand mirror to check your buttocks, private (genital) area, lower and upper back, and your neck and ears. It may be easier to look at your back in the wall mirror using a hand mirror.
- Use a comb or hair dryer to part your hair so that you can check your scalp.

What to Look for

Here are some things to look for. Finding one or more of these does not mean you have cancer, but that you should be checked by a doctor.

- A new or changing growth, spot, lump, or bump on the skin
- A sore that bleeds and does not heal
- A rough or dry red area on your skin, which might crust or bleed
- New itchiness, soreness or pain
- A rough bump
- A mole (or other spot) that is new or changing in size, shape, or color
- A mole with an odd shape, uneven edges, or areas of different colors
- Spread of the color of a mole outside the edge of the mole
- Redness or new swelling outside the edge of the mole

If You Find Something New or Different During a Skin Self-exam

- Draw a circle around the area with a marker or pen
- If your phone has a camera, take a picture of it
- Make an appointment to have a doctor look at it. The only way to know if it is skin cancer is to talk with an expert