

Mole Awareness Patient Information Sheet

Your mole (s) were checked today by the dermatologist who has not diagnosed your mole is cancerous or malignant. However, we cannot predict what can happen in the future and normal moles can change.

It is important to continue to check your moles on a regular basis, especially any that you have been concerned about, even if they have been diagnosed as benign today.

We suggest you look at your moles every 1 to 2 months and if you have any on areas of your skin you cannot see yourself e.g. your back, to ask a relative or friend to help.

It is difficult to detect a change in a mole you look at regularly and a digital photograph of any you are particularly concerned about taken in good natural light without a flash may help you detect changes more easily.

You should look out for the following changes. These are likely to occur gradually over a 2 to 6 month period and can often only be detected by repeatedly looking at the mole over a period of time.

<p>1. Colour (C)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any new black, brown or pink areas. • If a previously brown area becomes pink or pale. • If the colour becomes more irregular throughout the mole, especially if it develops different colours in different areas. 	<p>2. Shape (A & B)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the shape of the mole changes. • If the borders of the mole grows and extends. • If a previously round or oval mole becomes an irregular asymmetrical shape.
<p>3. Size (D)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the width of a mole changes (this is often hard to detect unless it is measured with a tape measure. • If a mole develops a raised area, particularly if this area is darker or different to the rest of the mole and if it bleeds easily. It is important even if only part of the mole becomes raised. 	<p>4. Inflammation, itching, crusting, scaling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These can be signs of melanoma but can also occur in benign moles particularly if moles are caught on clothes or jewellery or if there is another skin problem such as eczema. • If the mole is becoming malignant there are often other changes in addition to the inflammatory changes but it is always important to get the mole checked.

If any of your moles develop any of the above changes even if it is one that has been checked before please consult your GP quickly and if they are concerned they can arrange for you see us urgently on a 2 week wait appointment.

This means that you will be seen within 2 weeks of the GP referring you back to the department and is the quickest way to get your moles rechecked. The following websites have excellent photographs of melanoma if you wish for further information.

www.mayclinic.com/health/melanoma

www.dermnetz.org/lesions/naevi.html

This information is available in audio, Braille, large print and other languages. To request a copy, please telephone Leighton Hospital Switchboard on 01270 255141 and ask for the Patient Information Co-ordinator.

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