



NZ SKIN HEALTH

Skin Cancer in the Workplace & Skin Cancer in New Zealand

What is Skin Cancer?

Skin cancers grow when the cells that make up our skin are damaged, in most cases caused by overexposure to solar UV radiation. The top layer of the skin contains three different types of cells, and skin cancers are named for the cell type they develop in:

- **Basal cell carcinoma (BCC)** is the most common type of skin cancer. It usually spreads slowly and is easy to treat in most cases.
- **Squamous cell carcinoma (SCC)** is less common but grows faster than a BCC and may spread to other parts of the body if left untreated.
- **Melanoma** is the least common but most dangerous type of skin cancer. 80% of skin cancer deaths are from melanoma. It is often fast growing and can spread to other parts of the body where it can form a new cancer.

Skin Cancer in New Zealand

New Zealand has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world. It is estimated that over 80,000 kiwis are diagnosed with a form of non-melanoma skin cancer each year and **thousands of** people are diagnosed with some form of melanoma every year.

Skin cancer is **one of the** most common cancer in New Zealand after breast, colon, and lung cancer.

Mortality rates from melanoma are higher among men. While nearly 70% of melanomas are found in people aged 50 years and older, Melanoma is the most common type of cancer in 25-44 years olds.

Melanoma is one of the deadliest cancers, however, it is also the easiest to treat when caught early. In 2009 it was estimated that \$57M was the annual cost of treating skin cancer in New Zealand.

Skin Cancer in the Workplace

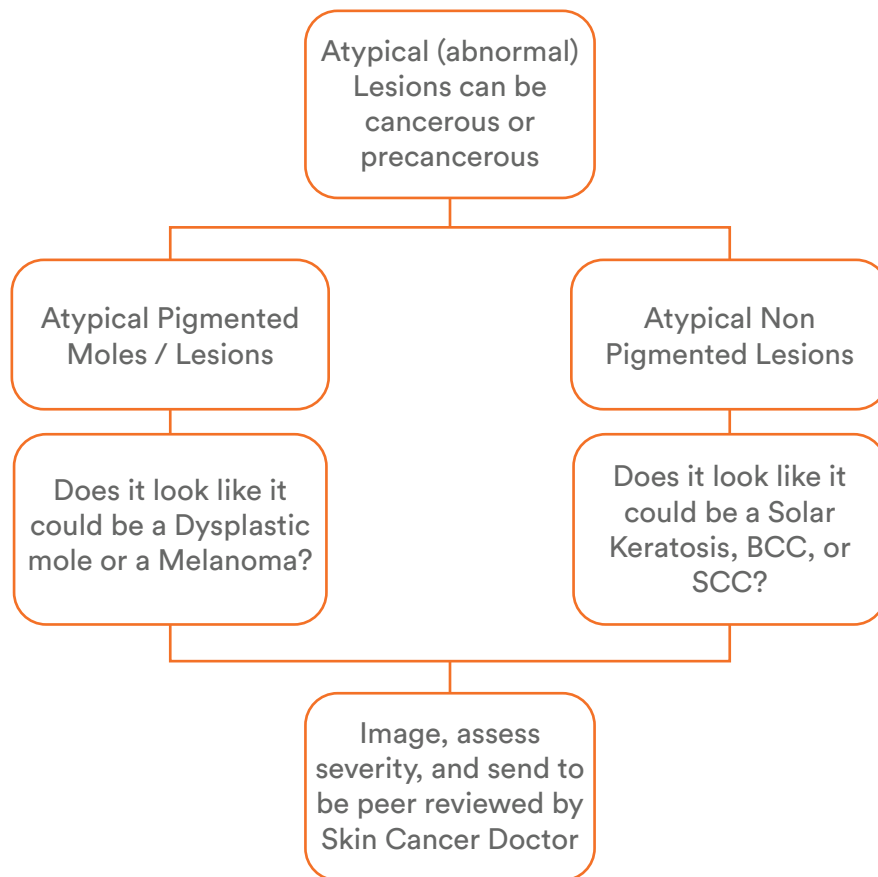
People who are particularly at risk include those that work in the outdoors for large portions of the year, especially over summer. This is because solar radiation in the form of ultraviolet light is carcinogenic to humans.

Other workplace related skin cancer risks can be associated with prolonged exposure to non-natural UV light such as welding or UV inspection lights. All skin types can be damaged by exposure to solar ultraviolet radiation (UVR). Damage is permanent, irreversible, and increases with each exposure.

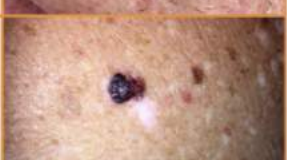
Some chemicals found in coal, tar, pitch, other refined materials and oils have also shown to increase skin cancer risk factors.

Gender, age, family history, and previous skin cancers play an important role in determining risk for future skin cancers.

Suspicious Lesions – What we look for



A	Asymmetry	Is one half different to the others?
		
B	Border	Does the spot have and irregular border?
		
C	Colour	Is the spot multicoloured?
		
D	Diameter	Is the spot growing or larger than 5mm?
		
E	Elevation/Evolution	Has the spot changed or become raised?

SOLAR / ACTINIC KERATOSIS <i>Precancerous: Should be monitored or treated (depending on severity)</i>	
ATYPICAL / DYSPLASTIC MOLES <i>Precancerous: Should be monitored or treated (depending on severity)</i>	
BASAL CELL CARCINOMA (BCC) <i>Cancerous: Slow to spread but should be treated or removed</i>	
SQUAMOUS CELL CARCINOMA (SCC) <i>Cancerous: Can be life threatening and should be treated or removed</i>	
MELANOMA <i>Cancerous: Most aggressive & life threatening. Should be removed</i>	

Workplace Skin Check Information

HEAD TO TOE SKIN CHECK

- A Senior Dermoscopist will conduct a thorough examination of your skin using a dermatoscope – a specialized handheld device which enabled clearer visibility of the skin and structure of skin lesions.
- You will be asked to remove items of clothing so it is recommended to wear comfortable and easily removable clothing. A private room along with a gown or spa towel will be provided to ensure privacy and comfort.
- The skin check will determine if there are lesions that show features of skin cancer. Any such lesions will be imaged using a dermoscopic camera and sent for subsequent expert diagnosis.
- Where it is established that there are no concerning lesions, the dermoscopist will discuss this positive outcome with you.

SKIN CANCER EDUCATION

- You will receive information about checking your skin at home and sun health tips to protect yourself and your family.

EXPERT DIAGNOSIS OF SUSPICIOUS MOLES

- After the appointment, if any lesions are selected for imaging, one of our Skin Cancer doctors will prepare a report which includes images of specific lesions and recommendations for the treatment or monitoring of these.
- Treatment can be provided at our Howick Clinic or advice for treatment clinics can also be provided if your GP is unable to assist.

LIMITATIONS OF A SKIN CHECK OR MOLE MAPPING

Diagnosis are made through dermoscopic analysis of lesions visible on the skin surface. Expert analysis and artificial intelligence software assisted diagnosis is the most accurate way of diagnosing skin cancers, however, as with any diagnostic service, there are limitations to what can be diagnosed.

- Some types of lesions are not suitable for imaging. You will be advised of any limitations during your appointment.
- This is not a general dermatology consultation and as such we are not able to advise on skin conditions that may not be associated with potential skin cancers.

Frequently Asked Questions

WHEN SHOULD I HAVE A SKIN CHECK?

- Full body skin checks should be done annually depending on your skin type. Think of it as your skin health warrant of fitness. If you're worried about a mole or spot it's best to be checked as soon as possible. Common signs include a change in colour, size, shape, itchiness, or bleeding. Early detection or regular follow-ups ensures a better outcome.

WHAT IS MY RISK OF GETTING SKIN CANCER?

- Everybody's skin is different and should be checked by a professional. Do you have fairer skin? Did you tan or get sunburnt a lot as a child? This can mean you're at greater risk. Remember that Kiwis have the highest rate of melanoma in the world so we do recommend regular skin checks.

HOW SHOULD I PREPARE FOR MY EXAMINATION?

- You don't really need to do anything – just walk in! We recommend that you wear something comfortable and easy to remove. We will provide you with a large towel or gown to cover up with, as your privacy and comfort is important to us. Let us know if you have any moles or spots that you are specifically concerned about. Please note that make-up can affect our imaging.

IS THE EXAMINATION SAFE?

- Yes. It is non-invasive. It's safe for adults, children, and even during pregnancy.

CAN I CHECK MY SKIN MYSELF?

- Great idea! At least every 3 months you should examine your own skin to look for the early signs of skin cancer. If you notice a spot is new, looks different, is changing, sore, bleeding, or itchy, come and see us for a spot check.

COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS

- We want to assure you that we are taking all precautions to keep you and our staff safe during your workplace skin check. Our staff will be wearing masks and sanitizing throughout the skin checks. We ask that you please wear a mask throughout your skin check and also sanitize before and after. Please do not attend your workplace skin check if you are unwell (fever, cough, or difficulty breathing) or if you have been in contact with someone who is unwell or awaiting COVID test. Please visit the [COVID-19 website](#) for more information.