



STEP ONE YOUR TOOLS

You will need a full-length mirror, a hand-held mirror, a blow dryer, a chair to sit on, and a well-lighted area.



STEP TWO YOUR FACE

Carefully examine your face, especially your nose, lips, mouth, and ears – front and back.



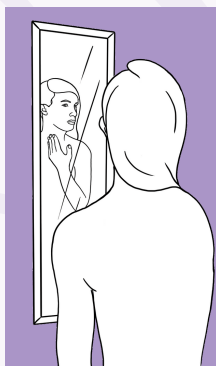
STEP THREE YOUR SCALP

Thoroughly examine the entire surface of your scalp, using a blow dryer and mirror to expose each section to view.

How to Perform a Skin Self Examination

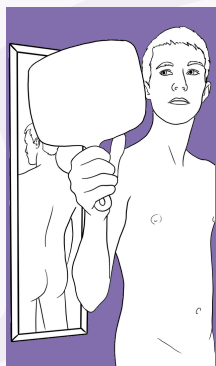
Any new moles or lesions, or changes in existing moles or lesions, should be checked by your healthcare provider right

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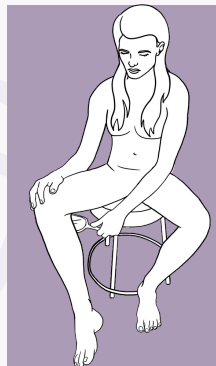
STEP FOUR YOUR FRONT TORSO

Facing the full-length mirror, inspect your neck, chest and abdomen. Women: check the skin underneath each breast. Lift your arms and check the sides of your upper body as well.



STEP FIVE YOUR BACK TORSO

Face away from the full-length mirror, holding the handheld mirror. Examine your back, your shoulders, the back of your neck, and any other area you could not see from the front. From there, continue down your body and examine your buttocks and the backs of your thighs.



STEP SIX YOUR LOWER BODY

Sit on a chair and scan your legs using the handheld mirror to look at the back of each leg. Check the tops and soles of your feet, making sure to check your toenails and between your toes. Use the handheld mirror to check your genitals and the insides of your thighs.

A Routine Skin Check Could Save Your Life

The earlier melanoma is detected, the easier it is to treat and the more survivable it is. The best way to detect melanoma early is with regular skin exams. AiM recommends having a healthcare provider check your skin annually. We also recommend making skin self-checks a regular part of your monthly routine.

What to Look For

First, check if any moles or lesions fit the ABCDE rules. Then look for any moles or lesions that fit the Ugly Duckling rule. These rules can help you tell if any moles or lesions should be checked by your healthcare provider.

The ABCDE and Ugly Duckling rules are:

Asymmetry

A

Melanomas are frequently asymmetrical: the shape of one half does not match the other.

B

Border Irregularity

Melanomas frequently have uneven or irregular borders (ragged or notched edges).

Color

C

Melanomas often contain multiple shades of brown or black but can sometimes be mixed with white, gray, blue, or red. Some melanomas will show a loss of color in a preexisting mole or in the area surrounding the mole.

Diameter

D

Melanomas are often larger than 6 mm (1/4 inch) in diameter. However, about 30% of melanomas are found when they are less than 6 mm in diameter.

Evolving

E

A mole that changes in size, shape, or color should be checked by your healthcare provider.

Spot The Ugly Duckling

An "Ugly Duckling" is a mole or lesion that is unlike the others on your skin. It might be a lighter colored or darker colored mole or lesion than the others around it, or it might be a larger or smaller mole or lesions than others around it.

