

Could your mole be abnormal or even cancerous?

Know the “ABCDEs” when checking your moles, and point out suspicious or concerning spots to your doctor.



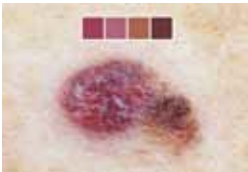
“A” is for Asymmetry

Asymmetry means one half of a mole does not match the other half. Most normal moles are symmetrical. When checking your moles or freckles, draw an imaginary line through the middle and compare the two halves. If they do not look the same on both sides, ask your doctor to check it.



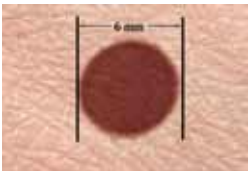
“B” is for Border

If the border or edges of the mole are ragged, scalloped, fuzzy or otherwise irregular, ask your doctor to check it. Melanoma lesions often have uneven borders.



“C” is for Color

A mole that does not have the same color throughout or has shades of tan, brown, black, blue, white or red is suspicious. Normal moles are usually one or two shades of color. A mole of many shades or one that has lightened or darkened should be checked by a doctor.



“D” is for Diameter

Melanomas are often greater than 6 millimeters in diameter (approximately the size of a pencil eraser).



“E” is for Evolving

A mole that is evolving—for example, growing larger, shrinking, changing color, beginning to itch or bleed—should be checked. Changes in the flat portion of a precancerous mole (or early melanoma) may occur before changes in thickness or height. If uncertain, check with your doctor.