

Skin Cancer in Skin of Color

Though the risk of skin cancer is lower in people of color (POC), skin cancer still affects people of all ethnicities. Research has shown that skin cancer is often spotted at advanced stages in Black and Hispanic people when it is harder to treat.

What You Need to Know:

- Melanin has a natural SPF of 13. While this gives some natural protection from ultraviolet radiation, having more melanin does not replace the need for sunscreen or prevent skin cancer.
- In people of color, it often appears in hairless areas of the body like the eyes, palms of the hands, soles of the feet, underneath fingernails and toenails.
- It can look different depending on a person's skin tone. On a person with lighter skin, it may look red, black, or brown. For a person with darker skin, a change in texture rather than color may be more noticeable.
- The good news? Most skin cancer can be cured when detected and treated early.



Look Out For:

- Dark spots
- Patches of skin that are growing, bleeding, or changing in any way
- Blisters or sores that don't heal or go away
- Patches of skin that feel rough and dry
- Dark lines under or around fingernails or toenails



What To Do:

- Get to know your skin!

- Perform monthly skin checks by using a mirror or asking a partner to look in harder to see areas.
- Look everywhere:
 - eyes
 - head and scalp
 - neck
 - arms and hands
 - chest and back
 - legs and feet
 - between the toes
 - toenails and fingernails
- Including places that get little to no sun:
 - bottoms of the feet
 - inside the mouth
 - private parts
 - rear end
- If you do find something, talk to a doctor right away