Be smart about your skin.
Know your ABCDs

One person dies of melanoma every hour. But when identified early, melanoma is almost always curable. Check your skin regularly, using this ABCD guide to evaluate moles. Remember, prevention is the best defense against skin cancer.

**Asymmetry**
Drawing an imaginary line through a mole, do both sides look alike? If one half of a mole doesn’t match the other, see your doctor.

**Border**
Check the outside edge of a mole. Is the edge sharp and easy to distinguish from the surrounding skin? If edges are ragged or fuzzy, see your doctor.

**Color**
Check the color of a mole. Is the color the same throughout the mole, or does it vary with shades of dark brown to black, or shades of white, red, or blue? If there are any color changes from one area of a mole to another, see your doctor.

**Difference**
Check your skin every month to look for CHANGES in moles or other spots. Are any of your moles different? Have they CHANGED in size, shape, color, or are they suddenly itchy? If you notice a difference in the size or look of any mole, see your doctor.

The moles on your body should have a common look, a “family resemblance.” If one mole seems different than the rest of the “family,” see your doctor. If the entire “family” looks somewhat strange, as long as they resemble each other and are not changing, there may be no reason for special concern. However, having a “family” of strange looking moles on your skin is associated with a higher risk of melanoma anywhere on the skin surface. So, when in doubt, see your doctor.

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This information is provided by the University of Michigan Comprehensive Cancer Center's Multidisciplinary Melanoma Clinic and is intended to serve only as a guide. To ensure an accurate diagnosis, see your doctor for a skin cancer screening.

For more information, log on to https://www.cancer.med.umich.edu/melanomaclinic.htm or call the U-M Cancer AnswerLine at 1-800-865-1135.