



Ask the Expert



We have a lot of practitioners just waiting to help you

Melanoma Update 2012

Experts from the American Cancer Society predict a disturbing increase in melanoma cases in 2012. An estimated 76,250 new cases of melanoma will occur in the US this year. This is a significant rise of 8% compared to 2011.



Many experts attributed this increase to greater awareness of melanoma as people are more frequently checking their skin and regularly coming in for professional skin exams. Additionally, new technologies allowing us to detect melanomas earlier is another contributing

factor to the increase in melanoma cases found per year. These factors are encouraging, even though we are finding more melanomas.

However, the troubling statistic is the simultaneous increase in melanoma related deaths. The American Cancer Society noted in Cancer Facts and Figures 2012 a rise in melanoma-related deaths by almost 400 cases. Top dermatologists and oncologists in the U.S. agree that additional factors may be responsible for these increases such as increased exposure to UV radiation.

The practitioners at Water's Edge Dermatology urge you to perform monthly skin exams, head to toe. We urge you not to use tanning booths and to protect yourself diligently when in the sun. A professional total body skin exam should be performed every 12 months and any time a concern arises. If you have a personal history of skin cancer, many moles or a family history of melanoma, a total body skin exam is recommended every 6 months. Other risk factors include: sun sensitivity; difficulty tanning; natural blonde or red hair; history of excessive sun exposure, burns or tanning bed use; and diseases that suppress the immune system.



Melanoma Statistics

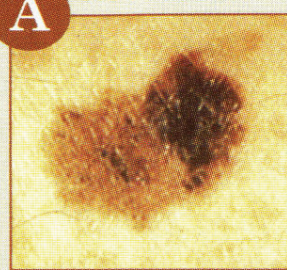
- Melanoma is the deadliest form of skin cancer. The incidence rates of melanoma have been climbing steadily for the past 30 years.
- Melanoma is now the fifth most common cancer among men in the US, and the sixth most common cancer among women.
- The lifetime risk of developing melanoma is now 1 in 36 for men, and 1 in 55 for women.

Important Links:

Skin Cancer foundation: <http://www.skincancer.org/>
Water's Edge Dermatology: <http://www.wederm.com/>
American Academy of Dermatology: <http://www.aad.org/>

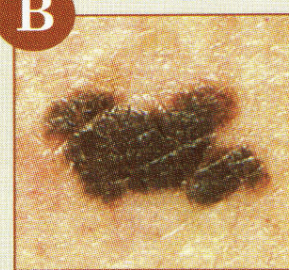
THE ABCDEs OF MELANOMA

A ASYMMETRY



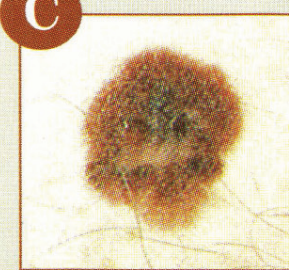
One half unlike the other half.

B BORDER



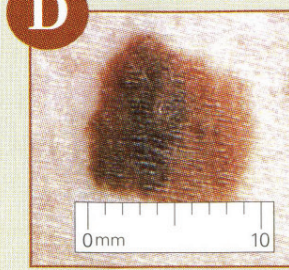
Irregular, scalloped or poorly defined border.

C COLOR




Varied from one area to another; shades of tan and brown, black; sometimes white, red or blue.

D DIAMETER

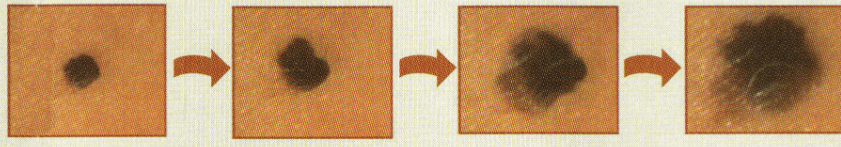


While melanomas are usually greater than 6mm (the size of a pencil eraser) when diagnosed, they can be smaller.

E EVOLVING



A mole or skin lesion that looks different from the rest or is changing in size, shape or color.

EXAMPLE: 

The Skin Cancer Foundation (2011). **Jump in Melanoma Cases Expected in 2012.** Retrieved 01/11/12 from: <http://www.skincancer.org/news/melanoma/jump-in-melanoma-2012>

American Cancer Society (2012). **Cancer Facts and Figures 2012.** Retrieved 01/11/12 from <http://www.cancer.org/acs/groups/content/@epidemiologysurveillance/documents/document/acspc-031941.pdf>

References

