

# Skin Cancer in New Zealand

## The numbers

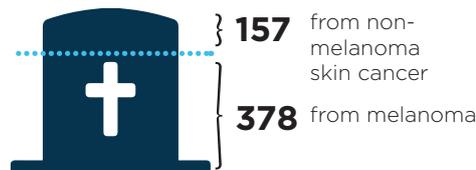
New Zealand currently has the world's highest rate of skin cancer\*, including melanoma.



80% of new cancers in New Zealand are skin cancer.

In Māori and Pasifika who have melanoma, a greater proportion have thick\*\* melanoma compared to Europeans with melanoma.

At least **82,000** New Zealanders get skin cancer every year, including melanoma.



**535** New Zealanders died from skin cancer in 2015.

Of these, 8 deaths were Māori.

**2,424** was the number of new melanoma diagnoses in 2015



...that's at least **6** people each day.

Death rates...



...are higher in men than women.

**50+**

In 2015, 85% of melanomas were diagnosed in people aged 50 years and over.



**More than road deaths...**

In 2015 there were 535 deaths from skin cancer in New Zealand. In the same year there were 319 road deaths.

Special thanks to Dr Mary Jane Sneyd for reviewing these numbers (including estimates).

\* Skin cancer is the uncontrolled growth of abnormal skin cells. Melanoma is the most dangerous skin cancer. If left untreated, it can spread rapidly to other parts of the body.

\*\* The Breslow thickness is reported for invasive melanomas. It is measured vertically in millimeters from its top to its deepest point.

## The good news

Most skin cancers can be prevented. If detected early, most can be successfully treated by your doctor.



### Prevention

Most skin cancers can be prevented by reducing exposure to ultraviolet radiation (UVR) by using the five SunSmart steps - slip, slip, slop, slap and wrap.



### Check UVR levels in NZ

Three FREE recommended ways to check for UVR on your device:

- See the Sun Protection Alert on SunSmart.org.nz
- NIWA daily UVI forecasts
- uv2Day app



### The First Sign

Is often a change in size, shape or colour of an existing mole or freckle, or the appearance of a new one.

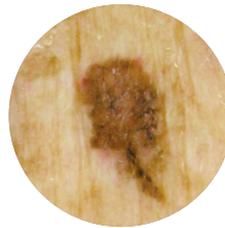
# ABCDE for melanoma - a guide

The images used in this guide are indicative only, as colours and details may vary depending on your screen or print copy.



## Asymmetry

Two halves of the 'mole' are different from one another.



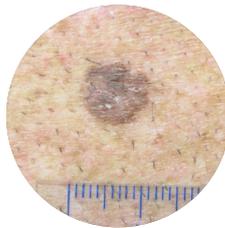
## Border

The edges of the 'mole' are poorly defined. It is a ragged, notched, blurred or an irregular shape.



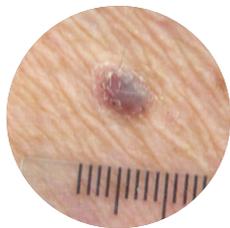
## Colour

The colour is uneven with shades of black, brown and tan. Melanomas may also be white, grey, red, pink or blue.



## Different

from other lesions (ugly duckling) there is a change, particularly an increase in size. Melanomas are usually bigger than the end of a pencil (6mm), but can be much smaller.



## Evolving

Is this a new 'mole' or skin spot? Or is this 'mole' or skin spot changing, or becoming bigger, or sticking out or painful?



Visit the **DermNet NZ** channel on youtube for more information.

## Examine yourself for skin cancer



1

Examine your body front and back in the mirror, on the left and right sides with arms raised.



2

Bend your elbows and look carefully at your forearms, the back of your upper arms and your palms.



3

Check the back of your legs and your feet, as well as the spaces between your toes and the soles of your feet.



4

Examine the back of your neck and part your hair to check your scalp with a hand mirror. Use a comb.



5

Finally, use a hand mirror to check your back and buttocks.

If you see anything you are unsure about, contact your doctor.