

SKIN CANCER PROGRAM

SOME FACTS AND STATISTICS

At least 2 in 3 Australians will be diagnosed with skin cancer before the age of 70.

Melanoma is the third most common cancer in both men and women.

- In Australia, 1 in 14 men and 1 in 24 women will be diagnosed with melanoma sometime in their life.
- 1 in 200 people over the age of 60 have a melanoma.
- More than 1,400 Australians died from melanoma in 2014.
- The incidence of melanoma is increasing and of the 14,000 new cases of melanoma expected to be diagnosed in 2018 it is estimated that 1,900 Australians will die from melanoma in 2018.
- Melanoma kills more young Australians (20-39 year olds) than any other single cancer.
- Melanoma is the most common cancer in young Australians (15–39 year olds) making up 20% of all cancer cases in this age group.

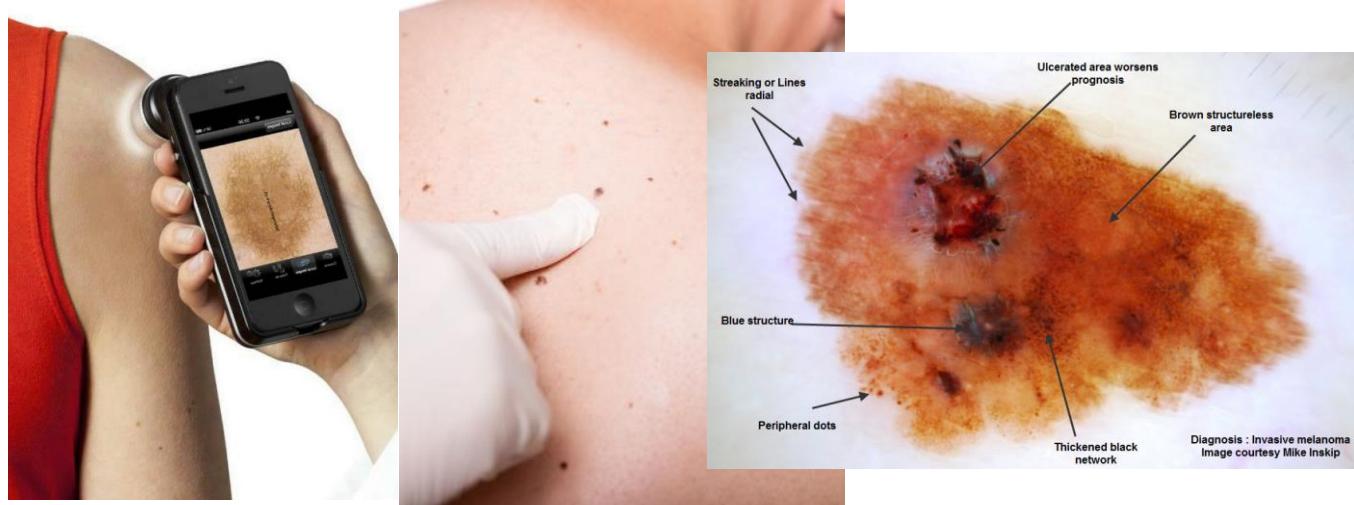
The good news is that if melanoma is identified at an **early** stage, simple treatment can result in a complete **cure**. According to studies, only 8% of melanomas can be diagnosed without the aid of a dermatoscope, and 9% of melanomas can only be detected by following a lesion over time.

SCREENING GUIDELINES

The latest Australian guidelines recommend that people at high risk of melanoma should have **a full skin examination every 6 months**. Risk factors include increasing age; history of previous melanoma or non-melanoma skin cancer; family history of melanoma, more than 50 moles, atypical moles or large moles; skin that burns easily; sun damaged skin.

Risk factors need to be kept in perspective. Most people with risk factors will not develop melanoma. More importantly most people who develop melanoma do not have any risk factors. Because of this our practice offers **free skin cancer screening** to any of our patients who desire to be checked.

Melanomas are more likely to be diagnosed at an early stage through screening when excision is curative.



WHAT WE DO

As melanomas and other skin cancers can develop anywhere on the body where there is skin, a full body screening is highly recommended.

When required you will be asked to dress down to your underwear and to take off your shoes and socks. Your doctor or our highly trained skin nurse will carefully examine all abnormal skin lesions or moles with an instrument called a dermatoscope. If you do not have many moles then the entire examination may be as short as 10 minutes. It can take up to an hour to examine patients with many moles.

When a lesion of concern is identified, there are a number of actions that may be taken:

- 1) The lesion may be biopsied and sent to a pathologist for identification. The biopsy technique depends on numerous factors.
- 2) A high definition close-up photograph may be taken with review of the lesion three months later for change.

CONSENT, TREATMENT, FOLLOW-UP

Your privacy is important to us and any photos taken will be removed from the camera, uploaded into your history and stored on our secure servers. We will offer you the option of a **reminder text or phone call** when the 3 month mole review is due. This is normally only a brief visit as only lesions of concern are examined at this time. We will also offer you the option of a reminder text or phone call when the next full skin examination is due.

Should the pathology confirm that you have a skin cancer then in most cases this will need to be excised including a **margin** of normal skin to reduce the risk of the cancer recurring. In some cases, the skin cancer may be treated with cryotherapy (freezing), diathermy (burning) or a topical cream.

Please feel free to discuss any part of this with our doctors!