

Skin cancer checks

Australia has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world, two to three times the rates in Canada, the US and the UK. Skin cancer happens when the skin cells are damaged, for example, by overexposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun. There are 3 main types of skin cancer – namely, Basal cell cancer, Squamous cell cancer and melanoma. Current statistics show that about two out of three Australians will develop some form of skin cancer before the age of 70.

Australia and New Zealand have the highest melanoma rates in the world and it is third most common cancer in Australian men and women. Melanoma is the most common cancer in young Australians (15-39 years old) and kills more young Australian than any other single cancer. Incidence in people over 60 is also very high and increasing. In 2017, more than 1800 Australians died from melanoma; that is five people each day; however most of these deaths from are preventable. Prevention, early detection and treatment of skin cancer is essential. You should check your own skin at least every 2-3 months for any changes, but it is strongly recommended that you have a full body skin check with your doctor every 12-24 months. People who have been diagnosed with a skin cancer previously may need a more regular skin check as they are at higher risk of developing more skin cancers in the future.

At Myaree medical centre, we have doctors who are experienced and have undertaken extra qualifications in the early detection, diagnosis and treatment of all skin cancers. Our doctors' priority is to provide our patients with the best possible care and perform a thorough full body skin check with help of a dermatoscope. This is a specialized equipment which allows the examination of the skin using skin surface microscopy, also called epiluminescent microscopy. In experienced hands, it can make it easier to diagnose melanoma.

Our practice is also equipped to enable any necessary procedures to be undertaken onsite – such as treatment of pre-cancerous sun spots, various skin lesion biopsies and more extensive wide surgical excisions of skin cancers. In some instances your doctor might need to refer you for more specialised care depending on your biopsy results.

If you wish to have a skin check with one of our doctors, please call us to book an appointment. It is important that you mention to the receptionist that it is for a skin check so that a 30 minute appointment can be arranged with the appropriate doctor. A referral letter is NOT required.

Having a regular full body skin check can help to detect skin cancers in their early stages and with appropriate treatment, the prognosis is significantly better than if found later.

When should I have my skin spots checked?

When you have a:

- new spot that is different from other spots around it
- spot, mole or unusual freckle that has changed in shape, size, or colour
- sore that doesn't heal
- skin spot that you are worried about

Skin check fees

- Full body skin check - \$145
- Partial skin check (1-3 moles) - \$80