

# CATCH SKIN CANCER BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE BASICS OF  
SKIN CANCER



**DR. ANNEMIE VANDER STRAETEN**



## WHAT IS SKIN CANCER?

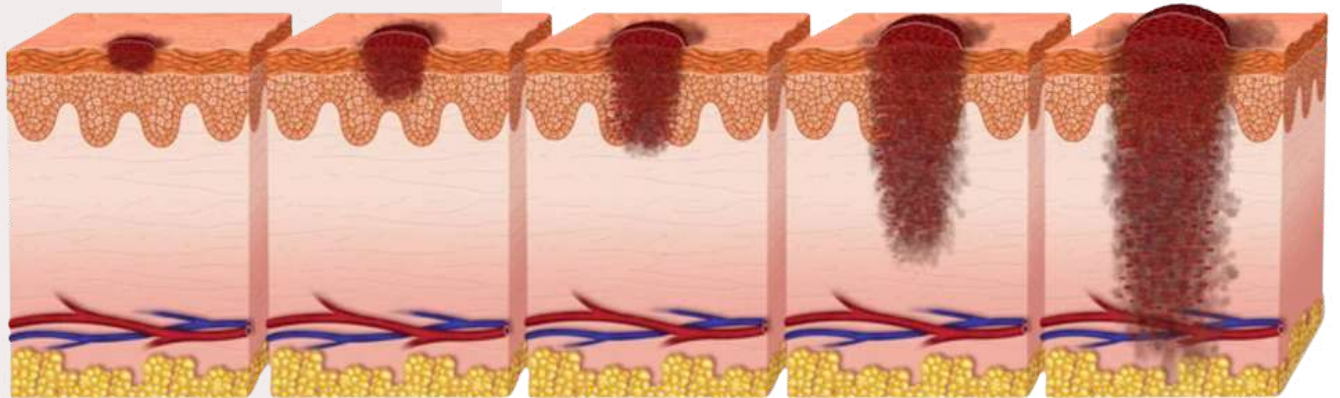
Skin cancer is the uncontrolled growth of abnormal skin cells, often due to DNA damage caused by ultraviolet radiation. Think of it like a garden where weeds suddenly start to overpower and damage your beautiful plants.

## WHY EARLY DETECTION IS KEY?

Catching skin cancer early is akin to nipping a problem in the bud. When detected in the initial stages, treatment options are more effective, less invasive, and the chance of a full recovery is higher. In emergency medicine, there is something called the “golden hour”, where immediate treatment dramatically improves outcomes. The same applies to skin cancer; the sooner you catch it, the better.

## MELANOMA

Melanoma originates from pigment-producing cells and is notorious for its ability to spread rapidly.



*Picture it as a wildfire that, if not contained quickly, can rapidly devour a forest.*

## BASAL CELL CARCINOMA

*Check your skin every three months to look for early signs of skin cancer.*

This is the most common form of skin cancer. It often appears as pearly nodules and usually grows slowly. It can be very disfiguring if not treated timeously. They are raised, transparent, pearly nodules that form on the skin, usually on the face and other sun-exposed areas.



*Imagine it as a weed in your garden that grows gradually but can become a nuisance if ignored.*

# SQUAMOUS CELL CARCINOMAS

This is the most common form of skin cancer. It often appears as pearly nodules and usually grows slowly. It can be very disfiguring if not treated timeously. They are raised, transparent, pearly nodules that form on the skin, usually on the face and other sun-exposed areas.



*Protect your skin with  
a professional skin  
exam.*

*The Good News:  
Skin Cancer is both  
easy to identify and in  
the early stages easy to  
treat.  
Just be Aware!*

## MALIGNANT MELANOMAS

This is a type of cancer that develops from pigment containing cells. It can at first look like a freckle or an innocent mole that has been there for a long time, but a melanoma can appear anywhere on the skin. They can be small brown or black or larger, multi-coloured patches on the skin with an irregular outline. They may also become elevated, crusty and may even itch and bleed. But they all spread easily and are therefore the dreaded killers.





*People who abused steroids to increase their sport performance are more at risk.*

## CAUSES AND RISK FACTORS

- SUN EXPOSURE

The sun is like a double-edged sword. While it provides vitamin D, its UV rays can harm your skin. Those who are frequently exposed to the sun are at a higher risk.

- FAMILY HISTORY

If cancer runs in your family, you have a higher chance of developing skin cancer yourself.

- PHYSICAL TRAITS

People with lighter skin, hair, and eyes are more susceptible to skin cancer.

- AGE AND GENDER

Older people and men are generally more susceptible.

A person wearing a white lab coat is standing on a rocky shore. The person's hands are visible at the top, and their feet are visible at the bottom, standing on the rocks. The background shows a calm body of water with ripples. The overall scene is serene and professional.

## CHANGES SHOULD BE CHECKED!

Any new moles or any moles with changes (size, thickness, discolouration, bleeding or not healing, etc.) should be checked! If you find something that seems suspect to you, rather be on the safe side and have it checked out by your doctor.

# THE ADCDE RULE

## **A for Asymmetry**

(one side looks different to the other side.)



## **B for Borders**

irregular, blurred or jagged.



## **C for Colour Variation**



## **D for Diameter**

larger than 6mm.



## **E for Evolving**

over time.





## SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

- New moles or changes in existing ones can be a red flag.
- Remember the ABCDE rule.
- Itchiness and Pain.
- Nodular Melanoma appearing.

*The Nodular Melanoma is the most dangerous of them all. Look out for:*

*Elevated above the skin | Firm to the touch | Growing*



## PREVENTION TIPS

### **Routine Checks**

- Regular skin checks are akin to maintaining your car; it might be running fine, but regular inspections can prevent bigger issues down the line.

### **Sun Protection**

- Sunscreen is to your skin what an umbrella is to a rainstorm—a necessary shield.

### **Avoiding Tanning Beds**

- Tanning beds are like fast food for your skin; they might offer short-term satisfaction but can cause long-term harm.

### **Healthy Diet**

- Eating foods rich in antioxidants.

# WHAT IS MOLE MAPPING?



Mole mapping uses photography to track any changes to your moles over time. These changes can include changes in the size, shape and colour of your moles, signs that a mole could potentially be turning cancerous. This technique is a useful tool for identifying skin cancers, called skin melanomas.

## **Benefits of Mole Mapping**

Mole mapping serves as a comprehensive archive of your skin. Imagine it as a detailed map of a city, marking even the smallest alleys and changes over time.

## **Technology Behind Mole Mapping**

Intricate software and high-definition imaging make mole mapping as advanced as satellite imagery, providing a detailed landscape of your skin.

# HOW DR. ANNEMIE VANDER STRAETEN CAN HELP

## **Personalized Care Plans**

Each treatment plan is unique, tailored to meet the individual needs of each patient, by using Mole Mapping Technique.

## **The Importance of Being Proactive**

Proactive skin care is like investing for retirement. The earlier you start, the greater the long-term benefits.

*Knowledge is  
Power  
The more you  
know about  
your skin, the  
better you can  
protect it.*



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