

SKIN SELF-EXAMINATION

It is important to detect skin cancer at the earliest possible stage.

The sooner the diagnosis is made, the sooner treatment can take place and the greater the chance of recovery. It is therefore useful to keep an eye on your skin and check for suspicious spots. Below you can read how to systematically check the skin, what to look for and when to contact us.



HOW DO I CARRY OUT A SKIN EXAMINATION BY MYSELF?

You can check your skin systematically from top to bottom:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------|---------|
| - (Non)hairy part of the skull | - Shoulders | - Belly |
| - Neck | - Arms | - Back |
| | - Backs of hands | - Legs |
| | - Cleavage | - Feet |

For the parts of the skin that you cannot see well yourself, you can use a hand mirror, or have your partner look at them, for example.

MORE INFORMATION

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The Skin Cancer
Foundation

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'Patient care must be much better aligned with patient needs'

NADIA

Nadia (27 years old) is a medical researcher in the Dermatology department

As a volunteer at HUKAs she wants two things. "On the one hand I want to help people who don't know much about skin cancer to gain more knowledge. It is a dangerous disease that can have a big impact, that needs to be known more widely. On the other hand, I want to create more understanding for patients among the people who do know something about it. As Kim also indicates: many people underestimate it."

HUKAs represents the interests of patients with non-melanoma skin cancer. "We offer reliable, up-to-date information and bring people into contact with each other. Through webinars and contact days, among other things, we create more awareness in the field of skin cancer."

More personal care

Nadia is primarily interested in patient care. This should be much better suited to their needs. "Providing personalized care is increasingly a trend, but I think there is still a lot of room for improvement, especially in the non-medical field. We try to contribute to this through my research."

I ask patients what they encountered, what information and care they missed and at what time. In some people, skin cancer has a mainly psychological effect

impact while the other wants to quickly get on with his life. How can we respond to this better? We can use HUKAs to make the patient's voice heard."

Various treatments

Nadia advises anyone who is worried about a spot on their skin to raise the alarm. "If you don't trust something or a spot gets bigger, changes color, thickness or suddenly a scab appears ... get it checked."

She believes it is important that patients know that there are various treatments available. "There are more options and patients can discuss them. Many people are now also surviving the more aggressive forms of skin cancer, because so many new therapies are available, and as a result there is now a larger group of patients who can get on with their lives."

Scan the QR code and find out all about Nadia's research



'The contact with fellow patients has been very beneficial for me'

KIM

Kim (35 years old) is a skin cancer patient and is active as a volunteer at HUKAs

Skin cancer is not always taken seriously. Kim thinks that is one of the worst things. "Through the patient foundation HUKAs I got in touch with fellow patients. That did me a lot of good. I wasn't alone and I received advice." She has had skin cancer several times. Now she is active as a volunteer at HUKAs, also known as the Skin Cancer Foundation.

"In 2015 I had a melanoma on my arm. About five years later I had several basal cell carcinomas on my face." The spots were removed. "Some people think that you immediately feel good again, but you live in uncertainty and are constantly thinking about it in the beginning. Every spot continues to stand out. At HUKAs there were people who understood my feelings. It was not waved away. It doesn't matter how big or small something is. It's about the individual. After 1.5 years I found a bit more peace. I have a check-up every six months."

Knowledge base

Doctors didn't always take Kim seriously either. "When I first had a scab on my face, the dermatologist initially thought it was nothing. After insisting, they removed it. They didn't believe me the second time either. A skin-colored mole that was behaving strangely only came to light during a second pinion. Then I transferred to another hospital."

HUKAs referred me to a specialist centre." Through HUKAs she also heard about other treatments methods. "In the hospital I was told what treatment I would receive, but through the patient association I heard about other possible treatments. I also did some research myself and then discussed it with the dermatologist." "I certainly also see HUKAs as a knowledge bank."

Personal blogs

Kim wants to change the image that skin cancer only occurs in the elderly. "More and more young people have skin cancer. Many people think that it does not affect them." At HUKAs she started writing blogs. "As a patient, I can now participate in guideline development and scientific research. That's really nice."

She has adapted her lifestyle. "I apply more sunscreen. Many people find it a hassle or only do it when they are lying on the beach. But you are in the sun every day. At the hottest times of day I seek shade or wear sun-protective hats and special clothing, such as UV-protective vests."

But despite that, it remains very important to apply a thick layer of sunscreen. I recommend that to everyone. And if you have a spot on your skin that you don't trust, have it checked out. Better too often than too little. Trust your feelings."