

Skin Cancer Awareness Month  
 Brain Cancer Awareness Month  
 Bladder Cancer Awareness Month  
 National Women's  
 Checkup Day | **May 9**

# Healthier You



## RECOMMENDED

### Cancer Screenings for Women

We should jump at any chance to celebrate women and their importance in our lives, which is why we love National Women's Checkup Day, the Monday directly after Mother's Day. This day encourages all women to take more steps and maintain better health. Below is a list of recommended cancer screenings for individuals at an average risk.

#### Monthly breast self-examinations



#### Yearly pelvic exams

#### Yearly Skin checks with a dermatologist

#### HPV Testing, every 5 years

If an HPV test is not available, a co-test with a Pap smear every 5 years, or a Pap test alone every 3 years is acceptable



#### Colon cancer screening starting at age 45 through age 85

Talk to your physician on which testing option is most appropriate for you:

- Colonoscopy (every 10 years)
- Cologuard test (every 3 years)
- FIT test (annual)
- Guaiac-based fecal occult blood test (annual)



#### Breast cancer screening

- Women between the ages of 40 to 44 should have the choice to screen
- Women should begin yearly mammograms at age 45 and continue through age 54. Women may switch to every other year at age 55.



#### Lung cancer screening

- Screen with low-dose CT scan if 55 or older, current smoker or have quit within the last 15 years, and have a 30-pack year smoking history (number of packs smoked per day multiplied by the number of years smoked)



## 5 surprising spots where skin cancers may hide

Skin cancer is the most common cancer in the United States, with an estimated one in five Americans developing the disease during his or her lifetime. It's important to know that skin cancer may affect anyone, regardless of skin color. In fact, African Americans are more likely to be diagnosed with melanoma, among the most dangerous types of skin cancer, at a later stage, when it's more difficult to treat.

You may think skin cancer usually appears on areas of your body exposed to the sun. This is often true of two types of skin cancer: basal cell and squamous cell carcinomas. These skin cancers are commonly found on the face, head and neck, although they may also appear on other parts of the body.

To protect yourself, it's important to get yearly skin exams by a physician. You should also perform monthly self-exams, noting anything suspicious. For hard-to-see body parts, try using a hand mirror or ask your loved ones for help. Also, be sure to check these commonly overlooked spots where skin cancer can hide:

### The feet

The tops of your feet may get a lot of sun exposure and be susceptible to basal cell or squamous cell cancers, especially if you often wear sandals or flip flops. But melanoma may also develop on the bottoms of your feet, between your toes and under your toenails.

### The scalp

"The scalp is a common site for melanomas," Dr. Farrington, Medical Oncologist at CTCA Chicago, says. It's estimated that about six percent of

melanoma patients have developed malignancies on their scalp or neck —perhaps because diagnosis tends to be delayed. Since it's difficult to check your own scalp, be sure your physician examines that area during your annual physical. "It's also easy to ask your hairdresser to do a quick scalp check during a haircut," Dr. Farrington adds.

### Behind the ears

Another common spot skin cancer can go undetected is on the backs of your ears, especially if the spot is relatively smooth and small. But melanoma on the ear may invade areas close to the cartilage, raising the risk of the cancer penetrating a nerve or blood vessel, and potentially, spreading to the lymph nodes.

### The pubic and pelvic areas

It's important to know that melanoma may occur in places rarely, if ever, touched by sunlight. The pubic area is a common place for moles to show up, even in people without a lot of moles. As with any moles, these should be checked regularly for changes. "It's also important to have regular gynecologic exams, because even though this area does not have sun exposure, melanoma may still occur," says Dr. Farrington.

### Under the nails

Melanoma under the nails is rare, but it does occur. The main symptom is a brown-black vertical stripe on the nail. A dark line extending from the nail to the cuticle and nearby skin, which is called a Hutchinson's sign, should also be checked out.

For more information,  
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