

# A Guide to Skin Cancer Self-Examination

For more information or to view photos of what to look for, go to

[www.dermatology.ca](http://www.dermatology.ca)

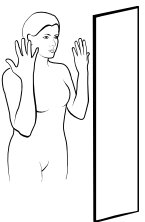
1



Ensure the area where you will be checking your skin is well lit. You will need a full length mirror, a hand-held mirror, a hair dryer, and either two chairs or two stools.

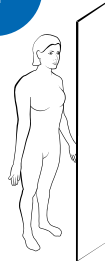
Remove all your clothing. To begin, raise your arms to waist height with your palms facing upwards. Examine your palms, fingers and forearms. Open your fingers and check the skin in between them. Turn your hands over and look at the backs of your hands, fingers, fingernails and forearms. Again, open your fingers and look at the skin in between them.

3



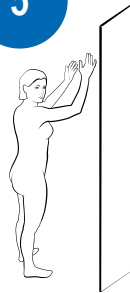
Now stand in front of the full length mirror. Raise your arms toward your chest. Your palms should be toward you. Look in the mirror to check the backs of your forearms and elbows.

4



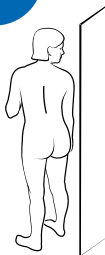
Now lower your arms to your sides, with palms facing away from the mirror. You should be able to see the whole front of your body. Check your face, neck and arms. Turn your palms toward the mirror and check your upper arms and shoulders. Examine your chest, stomach, pubic area, thighs and lower legs.

5



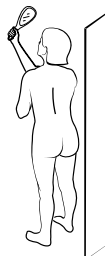
Now turn your body sideways to the left. Raise your arms over your head. Your palms should be facing each other. Check the whole side of your body, starting at the top with your hands, moving to your arms, underarms, torso area, thighs and calves. Finally, turn to the right and check the other side of your body in the same way.

6



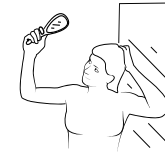
Next, stand with your back toward the full length mirror. Check your buttocks and the backs of your thighs and calves.

7



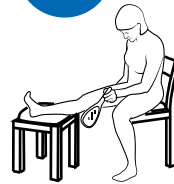
For this step, you will need the hand-held mirror. Holding up the mirror in front of you and standing again with your back to the full length mirror, look at the back of your neck, your back and buttocks. Check the backs of your arms also.

8



Staying in the same position, examine your scalp. It is recommended that you use a hair dryer (on a cold air setting) to part your hair to reveal the skin. You may find this step difficult and are encouraged to have your partner or a friend conduct your scalp examination with the aid of the hair dryer.

9



Sitting down on the chair and with your right leg resting on the other chair or stool, look at the inside of your leg from the top of your thigh right down to your ankle, using the hand-held mirror if necessary. Now do the same with your left leg.

10



Remaining seated, bring your right leg over the left leg, resting your foot on your left knee. Using the hand-held mirror, if necessary, look at the top of your foot, your toes, toenails and the skin in between your toes. Check the bottom of your foot also. Now do the same so you can examine your left foot.



Dermatologists  
Your **SKIN**experts

Canadian Dermatology Association  
Association canadienne de dermatologie