

Patient Participation Group (PPG) Newsletter July 2025

Medlink for Recalls

We would like to say a really big thank you to all our patients who have responded to the Medlink recalls/medication reviews that have been sent out since 01 April 2025 and we have been really pleased with the high response rate. For those patients who have not yet provided us with a contact e-mail and mobile telephone number, we would encourage you to do so as, along with your consent, these details will allow us to send you any relevant information much more easily. Medlink gives you one review in the month of your birth which is of particular help if you have more than one long-term health condition.

Healthier Together website

Please be aware that the Healthier Together website has been updated at: <https://www.healthiertogether.nhs.uk/>

Skin Cancer Awareness

We are raising awareness of the risks of skin cancer and ways you can help to reduce your risk.

86% of cases of melanoma are preventable yet increasing numbers of people are being diagnosed with this type of skin cancer. There are now more than 16,000 new cases each year in the UK.

Being sun-safe and regularly checking your skin for any changes, are two really important ways you can reduce your skin cancer risk.

Facts about Skin Cancer:

Melanoma skin cancer is the 5th most common cancer in the UK, accounting for 5% of all new cancer cases (2017-2019)

- 1 in 36 men will be diagnosed with skin cancer in their lifetime
- 1 in 47 women will be diagnosed with skin cancer in their lifetime
- 86% of melanoma skin cancer cases are preventable

There are two types of skin cancers: melanoma and non-melanoma:

- Non-melanoma refers to skin cancers which develop in the upper layer of your skin (the epidermis). You can be diagnosed with basal cell carcinoma (BCC), most non-melanoma diagnoses are BCC, or squamous cell carcinoma (SCC). Both these types of skin cancers don't spread to other parts of your body.
- Non-melanoma cancers usually develop in areas which are most exposed to the sun such as your face, ears, hands, shoulders, upper chest and back.
- Melanoma can spread to other parts of your body which is why it's the more serious type of skin cancer.
- Overexposure to the sun or sunbeds are the main cause of all skin cancers.

- More than 1 in 4 skin cancer cases are diagnosed in people under 50, which is unusually early compared with most other types of cancer
- Brown or black skin is more susceptible to a type of melanoma that is not associated with sun exposure, but appears on the palms, soles, under the nails and in mucosal membranes such as the mouth. These areas should be regularly checked for people with this skin type. (source: British Skin Foundation)

Risk factors:

- a previous non-melanoma skin cancer.
- a family history of skin cancer.
- pale skin that burns easily.
- a large number of moles or freckles.
- taking medicine that suppresses your immune system.
- a co-existing medical condition that suppresses your immune system.

You can minimise your risk of developing skin cancer by practising sun safety:

- use high factor sunscreen.
- dress sensibly in the sun.
- limit the amount of time you spend in the sun during the hottest part of the day (11am-3pm).
- avoid sunbeds and sunlamps.

Regularly checking your skin for signs of skin cancer can help lead to an early diagnosis and increase your chance of successful treatment.

More information:

- Skin check leaflet from Melanoma Focus: <https://melanomafocus.org/about-melanoma/skin-check-leaflet/>
- Melanoma Focus (<https://melanomafocus.org/>) have shared a number of visual assets for social media – these can be found here: <https://melanomafocus.org/about-us/may-is-melanoma-awareness-month/>
- Are you at risk of Skin Cancer <https://www.britishskinfoundation.org.uk/are-you-at-risk-of-skin-cancer>

With more and more foreign holidays being taken as well as sunny days in the UK, it is really important to check your skin regularly.