Skin Cancer

Most skin cancers occur on the face, neck, arms or on sun-exposed areas. Sun damage from excessive sunlight exposure is the most common cause of skin cancer. Light skin people are more likely to develop skin cancer than people with more skin pigment, but skin cancers occur in all people of all races. Squamous and basal cell cancers are the most common types. They are both slow growing and easy to recognize. They often form scaly open sores that do not heal. Melanoma is a skin cancer that looks like a mole. Most moles are harmless, especially if they do not change over time.

Most skin cancers can be prevented by avoiding excessive sunlight exposure. Signs that a skin sore or mole may be cancerous include:

- A sore that does not heal or one that bleeds or slowly gets bigger.
- Moles that are growing or are larger than a pencil eraser, or ones that have irregular borders or color variations.
- Moles that have a bump, raised area, or cause itching or pain.

If you have a skin sore or mole that could be cancer, it is important that you call your doctor right away for a skin exam and possible skin biopsy to determine the best treatment.

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