

ABCDEs of Melanoma

The ABCDE rule can help you remember the symptoms of melanoma. A is for Asymmetry, B is for irregular border, C is for color variation and D is for a diameter greater than 6mm. These lesions can change rapidly, as E is for evolving.



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Asymmetry

Asymmetrical A

Melanoma lesions are typically irregular, or not symmetrical, in shape. Benign lesions are usually symmetrical.

Border

Border B

The borders of an early melanoma tend to be uneven or difficult to define. Edges may be scalloped or notched.

Color

Colorful C

The presence of more than one color (black, brown, blue, red, etc.) or the uneven distribution of color can be a warning sign. Benign moles are typically one shade.

Diameter

Diameter D

Melanoma lesions are often greater than 6 millimeters in diameter, which is greater than the size of a pencil eraser.

Evolving

Evolving E

Any change in size, shape, color, or elevation is important in diagnosis. New symptoms such as bleeding, itching, or crusting should be brought to the attention of the healthcare provider.