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.

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