



## ADVICE FROM YOUR FAMILY DOCTOR



Dr Zobaida Akther

**Dr Zobaida Akther Mount Kuring-Gai Medical Centre (MKMC) Talks about skin cancer and skin checks this summer.**

Dr Akther says: "Everyone who has a skin and lives in Australia needs regular skin cancer checks."

**Here are 10 FAQ on skin cancer/skin check by Dr. Zobaida Akthar:**

**1. Dr. Akthar, how big a problem is skin cancer in the North Shore area?**

Skin cancer is a very common issue in Australia. In the North Shore area with our all year sun exposure and proximity to beaches and being a sun loving society, the risk is much higher.

**2. Who is most at risk of skin cancer?**

You can get skin cancer at ANY age, but rare in children. Everyone is prone to skin cancer irrespective of race or gender. Below are a list of people who are extremely high risk of skin cancers.

- Previous history or family history of skin cancer
- Previous sunburn/sun damage
- Fair skin/blue eyed individual
- Radiation treatment
- Immunosuppression due to other diseases or medicines
- Multiple moles >50 moles in the body
- Smoking
- Parkinson's disease

**3. What is the best way to identify an early cancer?**

Dr Akther says that the best way is regular checks with your GP. She says she has identified many early stage cancers due to regular skin checks in her patients. A new skin lesion or change in shape/size or colour of an old skin lesion must be checked by your GP. Abnormalities on your back will often go unnoticed if you do not do regular checks.

**4. How often should you visit a GP to get a skin check?**

If you live in Australia, everyone needs a regular check every year, irrespective of gender or ethnicity. If you are high risk as above, you need a 3 to 6 monthly checks with your GP.

**5. What types of skin checks are offered by Mount Kuring-Gai Medical Centre?**

ALL skin checks and biopsies are offered at Mount Kuring Gai Medical Centre. The Centre is open 7 days of the week, including public Holidays.

**6. How can we get an appointment for a skin check?**

You can book online or call us to make an appointment. Please let us know this is for a skin check as the doctor will have to prepare equipment if a biopsy is required. You must also allocate 15 minutes for the skin check and another 15 minutes for the biopsy if needed.

**7. What should I wear to the appointment?**

You should wear comfortable loose clothing. You will need to strip down to your underwear for the skin checks. We will do this maintaining full privacy and dignity of the patient.

**8. What happens if the doctor notes an abnormal area in the skin? What is the recovery period? After a skin biopsy**

Dr Akther will perform a skin biopsy of the abnormal area to see if it's a cancer. Recovery is usually 1 week.

**9. How long will I have to wait for results?**

The results take 1 week to come through. Dr Akther will call you to come and discuss results if an abnormality is detected.

**10. What does it cost to get a skin check at MKMC?**

There is no cost to the patient. This is a valuable preventative service offered to our local community by Mount Kuring Gai Medical Centre and we ask everyone to think of their skin checks this summer and call us to organise an appointment for a skin check.

**CALL US ON 9457 7588 or book online [www.mkmc.com.au](http://www.mkmc.com.au)**

This information is a general education guide only and not a tailored treatment plan. Treatment and follow up options for patients vary markedly between individual patients. For your own health assessment and advice you need to consult your doctor.



## OCTOBER IS BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

Breast Cancer Awareness Month is yet another strong reminder to all Australian women they should put their health and well-being first.

**Early detection remains the best chance of survival.**

It is important women of all ages self-check their breasts, and women aged 50 to 74 years take up BreastScreen Australia's invitation of a free screening.

Breast cancer is the most common cancer among Australian women apart from non-melanoma skin cancer.

Information is available on the Cancer Australia's website:

**[breastcancerriskfactors.gov.au](http://breastcancerriskfactors.gov.au)**



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