

## HEALTH

### Get your moles checked

#### BOOK A BASELINE EXAM.

Have a board-certified dermatologist examine your skin for anything atypical, says Ali Hendi, MD, a dermatologist in Washington, D.C. Most doctors recommend that those with a personal or family history of skin cancer get checked yearly; at your baseline exam, your doctor will tell you how often to get reexamined.

#### KEEP AN EYE ON YOURSELF.

If you have a lot of moles, see a medical photographer (your derm can suggest one) or just take photos yourself once a year to track them. “The goal isn’t to memorize every mole. It’s to learn the landscape of your skin so if something pops up, you’ll know,” says Hendi. Melanoma is more likely to show up in a new mark (a mole, freckle, or sun spot) than in one you’ve had since childhood. So look for new moles as well as existing ones that have changed shape, color, or size. —K.T.



### Assemble a first aid kit

**PREPARE YOUR KIT.** Being prepared, understanding how to use the items in the kit, and knowing its location in the house are essential for handling a first aid emergency, says David Farcy, MD, president of the American Academy of Emergency Medicine. You can purchase a premade kit from the American Red Cross (\$22; redcross.org/store) or a trusted health care brand, like Johnson & Johnson (\$13.50; target.com). If you prefer to buy items individually, start with adhesive bandages, gauze, tape, scissors, and a chemical cold pack. You should also consider latex-free gloves, a CPR barrier device, ibuprofen, a splint (cardboard or a magazine also works), antibiotic ointment, and Benadryl and cortisone cream, since allergic reactions are common household emergencies. Add resealable bags so you can safely dispose of any contaminated materials, suggests Jonathan Epstein, senior director of science for the American Red Cross.

#### STORE IT PROPERLY.

Having a well-stocked first aid kit is a wonderful thing, but if you’re the only one who knows where to find it or how to use the contents, it’s not worth much. So take the time to familiarize each member of the household with the kit. Designate a spot for it where it won’t get lost or covered up, says Epstein. This could be in the laundry room, under the kitchen sink, or on a shelf in the garage.

#### KEEP IT UP-TO-DATE.

You should replace items in your kit as soon as you use them, says Epstein. “Every time you change the clocks for daylight saving time, make it a safety week-end. Open your first aid kit and check the expirations.” Follow the manufacturer’s label on items like medicine and ointments. Gauze and bandages should last for a few years, as long as they’re properly sealed so as to remain sterile.

—Martha Upton