



PRESS RELEASE

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Skin Cancer Screening Day

On Saturday April 13th, the Gibraltar Health Authority (GHA), in conjunction with Public Health Gibraltar, will hold its 6th annual Skin Screening day, at the Primary Care Centre. The 'walk-in' clinic offers members of the public who have concerns about a changing mole or new growth on their skin, the opportunity to have these checked by a member of the dermatology team.

The public are requested to use the entrance via the front of the ICC building, where the clinic will be held between the hours of 9am to 1pm. At the main entrance to the ICC, the health promotion team will be operating a public information stall, providing informative leaflets and advice to members of the public.

On the day, the local dermatology team and Visiting Consultant Dermatologist, Dr Christian Aldridge, will be available to diagnose and advise on the appropriate management of growths.

The GHA kindly reminds the general public that this day is aimed at checking specific moles or growths on the skin that could potentially be cancerous. It is not for general checks on other skin conditions, such as psoriasis or eczema.

Skin cancer screening days are important, as they serve as a reminder for the public that protection should be a part of everyone's daily routine and allows for early diagnosis, which saves lives.

Signs that people should look out for, are:

A mole, birthmark, beauty mark, or any brown spot, that:

- changes in size or thickness;
- changes in shape developing irregular borders;
- changes in colour or texture;
- and/or is bigger than 6mm, (the size of a pencil rubber).

A spot, that:

- itches or hurts;
- crusts or scabs;
- ulcerates or bleeds;

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- and/or fails to heal within 3 weeks.

Having these signs does not necessarily mean skin cancer, as benign (harmless) growths can also change. However, our philosophy is that: “If you are in any doubt, have it checked out. If we are in any doubt, then we will take it out.”

Our best messages are always that of the importance of early detection of any skin cancer to reduce the chance that it could become life threatening. Also, that of the sensible use of sun protection, while taking into account that sun does have benefits, such as protecting bones and enhancing one’s mood.

Ms Suzanne Romero, Clinical Nurse Manager for the Primary Care Centre, said: “The Dermatology team recommend avoiding direct exposure to the sun between the hours of 11am and 4pm, keeping in the shade and regularly applying a minimum SPF 30 sunscreen. It is also important to keep yourself hydrated by drinking plenty of water. Remember, in Gibraltar we have high sun exposure all year round, so protection is necessary throughout the year, and not just at the beach.”

Minister for Health, Care and Justice, the Honourable Neil F. Costa MP added: “I would like to sincerely thank Suzanne Romero, her excellent team at the Primary Care Centre and Public Health Gibraltar for their work in organising this important, annually established event. It is important that we protect ourselves, especially in a climate such as the one we enjoy in Gibraltar. I would urge members of the public, who have any concerns about moles or growths on their skin, to attend the walk in clinic and allow our very experienced team to assess.”