



Dermatology Department

Your Skin Health: A New Approach with Advanced Technology

Introduction

University Hospitals Dorset and Dorset County Hospital are introducing a new collaborative partnership with an external Artificial Intelligence (AI) specialist, Skin Analytics, to support us in assessing your skin lesion for cancer and common harmless conditions. Together, we are launching an innovative technology-powered service to streamline the assessment of your skin health and the Dermatology service in Dorset.

Who are Skin Analytics & DERM

Skin Analytics is an esteemed external partner known for their expertise in developing advanced technology DERM (an AI Medical Device) which has been approved as a Class IIa medical device, is supported by published clinical research, and has been used in the NHS since 2020 seeing over 32,000 patients by September 2022. In our partnership with Skin Analytics, we will use DERM to electronically assess detailed images of your lesion/mole that will be taken at one of our photo hub clinics. DERM allows reviews to a dermatologist quality of skin lesion, which ensures the timeliness of a treatment plan for you.

Benefits of Skin Analytics and DERM

Precision and Recognition

DERM has been developed by Skin Analytics to recognise skin cancer and common harmless skin conditions using photographic images.

Collaborative Dermatologist Review

For added assurance, a consultant dermatologist will provide a second review after the AI system has reviewed your photos to ensure completeness of the reviewing process.

Efficient Assessment Pathway

If you have been referred by your GP, you will have the opportunity to visit our photo clinic situated within Dorset County Hospital or at Vespasian House. At this appointment, a healthcare professional will use both a smartphone and Dermatology equipment to capture high-quality images of your skin lesion/s. The aim here is to ensure you receive the care you need in the most timely way possible.

Consultation with your GP

You might have recently discussed your symptoms with your GP, and based on their assessment and depending on whether you meet the set criteria, they may recommend referring you to our photo clinic based at Dorset County Hospital or at Vespasian House.

If referred to one of our Photo Clinics

You may have received a text/email link for an online questionnaire before your visit. If you are unable to complete this online, it can be done during your appointment.

Before the clinical photographs are taken, one of our healthcare professionals will discuss the process. You will be asked to consent for clinical photography and, optionally, for the use of your images for teaching or publication. We will not take any photographs without your consent.

A series of secure photographs, including a detailed close-up image, will be taken. These images will be encrypted and uploaded to the AI system for analysis.

Some lesions, such as those covered in hair or under nails, may not be suitable for analysis. In such cases, one of our hospital Dermatologists (Skin specialists) will assess these lesions separately in a face-to-face appointment that will be communicated to you via phone and letter.

If you desire a chaperone during the session, please do not hesitate to ask. Our staff will be available to assist and reassure you along the process.

Next Steps: What happens after your appointment?

Your photos and questionnaire will be reviewed remotely by Skin Analytics and/or a Trust dermatologist and you will be directed to the right service for you.

If your skin condition is classified by Skin Analytics as benign (non-cancerous), your image will also be reviewed by a Dermatologist as an extra safety check. If it is benign, you will be discharged and sent back to your GP promptly, accompanied by a letter with the diagnosis and any additional patient information.

Further Assessment Guidance:

Cases requiring further assessment will be guided through the process and you will either be given:

- A face-to-face appointment at the hospital
- A telephone appointment
- A letter from your consultant team that you do not need an appointment, and written information about your skin diagnosis
- Surgical removal arranged directly
- Redirection of your case to the Community Dermatology team, who will arrange to see you.

When will I find out the results of this photographic procedure?

Typically, you can expect a letter communicating the outcome of your Photo clinic appointment within 2-4 weeks of your appointment. This timeframe allows our team to thoroughly analyse and interpret your results to ensure the most accurate and comprehensive understanding of your health.

If you require non-urgent treatment, we may contact your GP to ask them to arrange this.

Does an urgent referral or treatment mean I have cancer?

No. You could be asked to come back urgently for several reasons. Urgent appointments will generally be within a few weeks, so there should not be a long wait.

Your Data

Secure Storage: The clinical photographs and assessment reports will be securely stored in accordance with data protection regulations.

Data Usage: Your information will be used to support any further care you may need. Assessment reports will be sent to your GP practice for inclusion in your medical records.

Research Purposes: With your consent, we may use anonymised data for research purposes to improve our service.

For more details on how your data is handled, please refer to our privacy policy.

When should you worry about a lesion/mole?

It is important to check your skin regularly for any change. You may want to ask a family member or a friend to examine your back, or hard-to-see areas.

Following the ABCD–Easy rules can help you identify potentially worrying features:

- **A**symmetry – the two halves of the lesion may differ in shape.
- **B**order – edges of the lesion may be irregular, blurred or notched.
- **C**olour – the colour may be uneven.
- **D**iameter – report any mole larger than 6mm or a change in size or shape.
- **E**volution – changes in size, shape, colour or elevation or any new symptom such as bleeding, itching, or crusting.

It can be helpful to take images of your lesion to see if it is changing over time as it can be more reliable than using memory alone. It can be useful to do this every few months using a phone with a camera.

If you notice any of the changes described above, or are concerned about a mole or patch of skin for any other reason, then contact your GP as soon as possible.

How can you reduce your risk of skin cancer?

It is recognised that unprotected exposure to UV radiation can increase your risk of skin cancer. It is therefore important to be careful in the sun.

The British Association of Dermatologists (BAD) have compiled the following 'Top Sun Safety Tips' to protect your skin:

- Wear adequate clothing, a hat that protects your face, neck and ears, and a pair of UV protective sunglasses. Choose sun protective clothing (with permanently sun-protective fabric, widely available for adults and children) if you have fair skin or many moles.

- Spend time in the shade between 11am and 3pm when it is sunny. Step out of the sun before your skin has a chance to redden or burn.
- When choosing a sunscreen look for a high protection SPF (current recommendations are SPF 50 or 50+) to protect against UVB, and the UVA circle logo and/or 4 or 5 UVA stars to protect against UVA. Apply plenty of sunscreen 15 to 30 minutes before going out in the sun, and reapply every two hours, and straight after swimming and towel-drying.
- Keep babies and young children out of direct sunlight.
- Sunscreens are not an alternative to clothing and shade, rather they offer additional protection. No sunscreen will provide 100% protection.
- Do not use sunbeds.

Contact Numbers:

If your appointment needs to be cancelled or changed, please call the number on your appointment letter.

To withdraw consent for any photographs which have been taken to be analysed, please contact Skin Analytics: email - support@skinanalytics.co.uk
Please include your full name, date of birth and if possible, your hospital number (number starting with D) or NHS number which can be found on your appointment letter.

About this leaflet:

Author: Nikita Joseph, Dermatology Management Trainee
Written: January 2024
Approved: March 2024
Review Date: March 2027
Edition: v1

If you have feedback regarding the accuracy of the information contained in this leaflet, or if you would like a list of references used to develop this leaflet, please email pals@dchft.nhs.uk



© 2024 Dorset County Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
Williams Avenue, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 2JY
www.dchft.nhs.uk