

BENENDEN HOSPITAL:

Helping you to be sun safe

THE BALMY DAYS OF LATE SPRING AND EARLY SUMMER HAVE FINALLY ARRIVED, AND WITH THEM COMES OUR COLLECTIVE SIGH OF RELIEF AT THE CHANCE TO SPEND MORE TIME OUTDOORS, SOAKING UP THE SUNSHINE AND A DOSE OF ESSENTIAL VITAMIN D. WHILE BASKING IN SOME MUCH-NEEDED RAYS, IT'S IMPORTANT TO PRACTISE SUN SAFETY.



1 - 7 May was Sun Awareness Week, the British Association of Dermatologists' annual campaign to raise awareness of the importance of sun protection. It aims to tackle misconceptions that sun protection is rarely needed in the UK's temperate maritime climate.

Overexposure to the sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation is the main preventable cause of skin cancer, the most common form of cancer in the UK. Rates have risen steadily since the 1970s and at least 100,000 new cases are now diagnosed each year.

There are numerous ways to reduce your chances of developing skin cancer. Daily use of a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) 30 or above sun cream is recommended; use SPF 50 when in strong direct sunlight. Regularly check your skin for signs of skin cancer, ideally once a month, looking for new lumps, spots, scaly patches or moles that have changed shape, colour or texture. Early detection is the best step in the prevention of serious skin cancers, which is why it is best to get any suspicious moles screened by a dermatologist as soon as possible.

Benenden Hospital, near Cranbrook, offers a fast mole scanning service for anyone aged 18 and over, which provides an assessment of any moles or pigmented lesions you may be worried about and is accessible via a self-pay pathway. This consultation only lasts approximately 20 minutes and a consultant report is sent to patients within one week. If there is any cause for concern, the hospital's dedicated team of consultant dermatologists or clinical outpatient team can discuss the next steps. Find out more about the dermatology services at Kent's only CQC-rated Outstanding private hospital at: [benendenhospital.org.uk/treatments-services/dermatology](https://www.benendenhospital.org.uk/treatments-services/dermatology).

As well as keeping a close eye on moles, if you have a family history of skin cancer, fair skin or hair and lots of freckles, you need to be cautious about sun exposure. Naturally, sun-protective clothing goes a long way in shielding you from harmful rays – dark colours such as red, navy blue or black absorb more UV rays than lighter colours. It also goes without saying that children should always be shielded and given sun protection between March and October, with babies under six months kept out of direct sunlight.

However you plan to enjoy the glorious warmer weather this year, or whether you are working outdoors, remember to seek shade, cover up, wear sunglasses and sunscreen – and above all, be sun safe.

To find out more about Benenden Hospital, or book your scan today, visit [benendenhospital.org.uk/book-now](https://www.benendenhospital.org.uk/book-now), or call their private patient team on 01580 363 156.

**Guide price is from £55 for analysis of the first mole or pigmented lesion. Each additional mole/pigmented lesion scanned at the same consultation will cost £20.*

