

Melanoma awareness video quickly goes viral

Text: -

CTV.ca News Staff

Published Saturday, May 7, 2011 8:49PM EDT

A new online video designed to raise awareness about the dangers of melanoma has caught the attention of hundreds of thousands of people in just a few days.

The poignant video is called "Dear 16-year-old Me" and runs just over five minutes in length.

It features a series of melanoma survivors -- as well as family members and friends of some people who didn't survive -- telling the viewer about their experiences and what can be done to prevent the skin cancer.

The video was uploaded to YouTube on May 2 and has already been watched by more than 680,000 people as of Saturday morning.

It was created by the [David Cornfield Melanoma Fund](#), a group that was founded in memory of a young accountant who lost his battle with the disease in 2005.

Paul Cohen, a dermatologist who is involved with the group, says a key takeaway of the new video is that many people will survive melanoma if they get to their doctor early.

But they need to know what the warning signs are and how to avoid putting themselves at risk.

"In my office, I see young people with melanoma. People who are pregnant, people who are parents, people who die from a very preventable disease," Cohen recently told CTV's Canada AM.

"And the trick that we really need to emphasize is that you really can prevent this disease."

Cohen said people need to check their skin frequently for any changes and to watch for "the ABCDEs of melanoma":

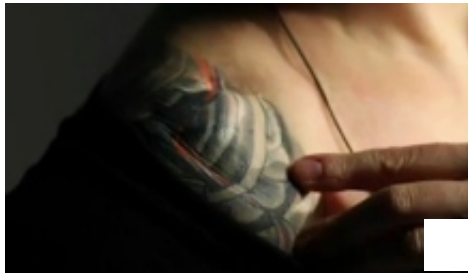
- Moles that asymmetric in shape
- Moles that have a border that is irregular
- Moles that are dark black in colour, or which have multiple colours in them
- Moles that are larger than the diameter of an eraser on the end of a pencil
- Moles that are evolving, which are changing size, shape or colour

He also said it's a good idea to have your partner check your skin for you as well, especially in areas that are hard for you to look at yourself.

With hot summer weather on the way, Cohen reminds people to wear sunscreen and to keep a close eye on their skin.

With files from The Canadian Press

PHOTOS



A new online video designed to raise awareness about the dangers of melanoma has caught the attention of hundreds of thousands of people in just a few days.



Dr. Paul Cohen appears on Canada AM from CTV studios in Toronto.