

Press release



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Quarter of Brits have never checked for Britain's biggest cancer

Nearly a quarter of Brits have never checked their skin for life-threatening changes, despite a surge in skin cancer deaths over the last decade, new research suggests.

One in four (23%) adults in Britain admit they have never checked for changes in appearance or number of moles on their skin, which can be a major warning sign of the disease.

The independent study of 2,027 people¹ was commissioned by skin checking app Miiskin, which has teamed up with the British Skin Foundation charity in the www.eyesonyourskin.co.uk campaign to battle the most common cancer in the UK. £1 for each free UK download of the app will go to charity for one month, starting today².

The study also revealed that three per cent had a mole they were concerned about for more than three months, but hadn't had it checked by a medical professional. With one in 50 currently having a persistently itchy or bleeding mole.

Surprisingly, 17% of Britain's under-35s believed they were too young or weren't exposed to the sun enough to develop skin cancer. Just under one in 10 under-45s (9%) thought they should only check their skin if advised to by a medical professional.

The self-checking message does seem to be sinking in for some though, with nearly a third (31%) doing monthly checks - the frequency recommended by the British Skin Foundation.

Almost a fifth of under 35s are now taking 'selfies' to monitor their skin for moles, with 18 per cent using photos to document changes.

A promotional graphic for the Miiskin app. On the left is the Miiskin logo with the tagline "Keep an eye on your skin" and an image of a smartphone displaying the app's interface. In the center is a photograph of a woman with long red hair wearing a wide-brimmed hat and sunglasses. On the right is the British Skin Foundation logo and a text box that reads: "Miiskin is proud to support the British Skin Foundation by donating a proportion of their profits to the charity". Below these elements is a grey banner with the text: "DOWNLOAD for free and start using Miiskin today and raise £1 for The British Skin Foundation for each download". At the bottom of the banner are two buttons: "ANDROID APP ON Google Play" and "Available on the App Store".

However, people are still taking risks with their skin health. One in 10 (11%) use tanning beds – 13% of which admit to sessions once or multiple times a week.

Only two fifths of Brits (38%) say they always use sun cream when exposed to the sun and despite warnings about the dangers one in 20 under 35s (5%) say they rely on sunbeds for a winter tan.

Skin cancer is on the rise in Britain, with more than 100,000 new cases diagnosed annually and 2,500 deaths from the disease every year. Latest Government statistics³ indicate a 35.8% 10-year rise in skin cancer deaths.

Jon Friis, founder and CEO of Miiskin, said: "With cases of skin cancer increasing in the UK, the self-checking message is starting to sink in for some, but not all. Keeping track of changes to your skin can be a challenge – and many people are now using technology to spot and document changes to their skin. Early detection is important for successful treatment."

Skin cancer is mainly caused by over-exposure to ultraviolet (UV) light. Non-melanoma skin cancers are the most common, with melanoma being one of the most dangerous.

The Miiskin app, which has already received 100,000 downloads globally, including 20,000 in the UK, was created to help people digitally track how skin and moles look, with reminders to routinely check for changes. It does not try to diagnose skin cancer or tell users that they are at risk or not. Those who do spot changes should seek advice from their GP or another medical professional.

Dr Anton Alexandroff, Consultant Dermatologist & British Skin Foundation spokesperson said: "It's important that people monitor their own skin regularly, to help track any changes which could be worrying. If any changes are noticed, the user can then visit their dermatologist for a medical assessment."

On Sunday (4 February - World Cancer Day) Miiskin was featured as the App of the Day in the new App Store for iPhone users in the UK and Ireland. Information about where to download the Miiskin app for free and generate a £1 donation to the British Skin Foundation is available here: <http://www.eyesonyourskin.co.uk/>

Ends/

Notes to editors

¹ Walnut Unlimited interviewed a nationally representative sample of 2,027 adults aged 18+ across GB between 12-15 January 2018. Surveys were conducted online and the results have been weighted and are representative of GB adults aged 18+. Walnut Unlimited is a member of the British Polling Council and abides by its rules. The survey was commissioned by Miiskin.

² For one month (6 February – 6 March 2018) downloads of the Miiskin app will generate £1 for the British Skin Foundation charity (for up to 5,000 new downloads). Visit www.eyesonyourskin.co.uk for details.

³ Latest ONS cancer statistics, May 2017. Table 12. Registrations of death from cancer: site and sex, England, 2005 to 2015. Based on malignant melanoma of the skin data.

About Miiskin

Miiskin was founded in Denmark by Jon Friis, who needed a better way to track the moles on his partner Rikke's back to check for signs of Melanoma. When Jon was told by the doctor that current best practice was using pen and paper, he couldn't help thinking that technology could simplify and improve this process.

The Miiskin app has already received 100,000 downloads and hundreds of positive messages from users around the world.

Crucially, the app does not try to diagnose skin cancer or tell users that they are at risk or not. The detection of skin cancer is complex and should only be undertaken by qualified doctors - not apps. Miiskin helps you keep a regular eye on your skin, so you can seek medical help if you spot concerning changes.

www.miiskin.com

About the British Skin Foundation

The British Skin Foundation is the only UK charity dedicated to raising funds for all skin diseases and skin cancer research. Their unwavering commitment to funding quality research means they won't stop until they've found cures for common skin problems like eczema and acne through to potential killers like malignant melanoma. To date they've raised £16 million to fund research projects since 1996.

None of their work would be possible without the help of supporters and people who dedicate time and effort to fundraise for the charity and to raise awareness of skin conditions.

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