

Dermoscopy

What is a dermascope?

A dermatoscope is a handheld instrument which enables a more accurate view of skin lesions through the process of magnification and illumination and elimination of the visual damping effect of the very outermost layer of the skin. The technique is known as dermoscopy.

What is the advantage of a dermascope?

Dermoscopy can be used for almost any skin lesion but is particularly applicable for the examination of moles and other pigmented skin lesions. It allows for more accurate clinical diagnoses and is an especially important tool on the early diagnosis of melanoma. It may also obviate the need for unnecessary skin biopsies and excisions.

What happens to the digital image?

Dermoscopic images can be photographed and stored on computers. Subsequent images can be then compared with the previous images. This technique is known as Serial Digital Dermoscopy and it is one of the most sophisticated ways of diagnosing melanoma early. The Dermoscopic images however, are never considered in isolation- they are always viewed alongside the naked eye images, which can also be stored and retrieved by the same computer technology. This new technology has been incorporated into "Skin Search" which is a new service dedicated to the early diagnosis of melanoma and other skin cancers.

Further reading:

skinsearch.com.au (under construction)

Melanoma

Moles

Skin screening