



News Release

MERCK CANADA ENCOURAGES CANADIANS TO PRACTICE SKINTIMACY™

This campaign aims to empower Canadians with resources to help recognize and prevent melanoma

KIRKLAND, QC, June 19, 2024 – This summer, Merck Canada is empowering Canadians with tools and resources to promote melanoma awareness and early detection through the *Practice Skintimacy™* campaign. The campaign, now in its second year, encourages Canadians to have a close, intimate relationship with their skin through regular skin checks to identify possible signs and symptoms of melanoma, a serious and often visible form of skin cancer.

In Canada, where the rates of many cancer types are projected to continue to decrease, melanoma remains a notable outlier. In fact, the number of Canadians receiving a diagnosis of melanoma each year continues to rise, more than tripling in the past 30 years. The *Practice Skintimacy™* campaign aims to help Canadians understand how to better protect themselves and their loved ones from melanoma and empower meaningful action in support of healthy skin habits.

“The more Canadians know about melanoma, the better equipped they are to help protect themselves and their loved ones,” said Andre Galarneau, Executive Director & Vice President, Oncology Business Unit at Merck Canada. “As we embark on the second year of the *Practice Skintimacy™* campaign, we are committed to empowering all individuals and their families with knowledge and resources with the hope of helping improve health outcomes and reducing the impact of skin cancer in Canada.”

Learn the ABCDE-Method with *Practice Skintimacy™*

[PracticeSkintimacy.ca](https://www.practiceskintimacy.ca) offers Canadians information on how to perform regular skin checks and a suggested list of household items to help examine those hard-to-see-areas. To know what to look for, the website also offers an ABCDE guide, which looks at the shape, appearance and growth of moles that may be signs of skin cancer.

“Checking your skin regularly is one of the easiest things you can do for your health,” said Kathleen Barnard, Founder of the Save Your Skin Foundation. “Skin cancer can appear in places that are hard to see such as your scalp and back. Involve a family member, spouse or close friend in your skin health routine.”

New this year, Canadians can also access Check-A-Mole through the site, a gamification developed by Spot the Dot—a patient organization located in Austria that works with athletes, artists, patients and dermatologists from around the world—to educate on some of the signs of melanoma. Check-A-Mole is available in seven languages and can be adapted for various skin tones.

“We’re thrilled that Merck Canada is making the award-winning Check-A-Mole game available through the *Practice Skintimacy™* campaign,” said Marije Kruis, Founder of Spot the Dot. “We know that lifestyle habits are developed early on in life, so by making this game accessible to all ages, we hope to reach younger adults and encourage healthy skin habits that they will carry throughout their lives.”

Why Early Detection Matters

A skin cancer diagnosis can be a life changing event for Canadians and their loved ones. This year, it is estimated that 11,300 Canadians will be diagnosed with melanoma skin cancer, resulting in 1,300 deaths. However, early detection can contribute to improved patient outcomes. Canadian patient support groups, including the Canadian Cancer Society, The Save Your Skin Foundation, and Melanoma Canada, recommend conducting regular skin checks to help detect early changes to your skin.

“Skin cancer remains common in Canada, but if found and treated early the chances for survival are more favourable,” said Falyn Katz, CEO at Melanoma Canada. “We’re proud to support *Practice Skintimacy*™ in encouraging Canadians to perform regular skin checks to help identify suspicious moles early on when skin cancer is easier to treat.”

Canadians are encouraged to visit practiceskintimacy.ca for more information about melanoma and to access resources to *Practice Skintimacy*™ at home.

About Merck

At Merck, known as MSD outside of the United States and Canada, we are unified around our purpose: We use the power of leading-edge science to save and improve lives around the world. For more than 130 years, we have brought hope to humanity through the development of important medicines and vaccines. We aspire to be the premier research-intensive biopharmaceutical company in the world – and today, we are at the forefront of research to deliver innovative health solutions that advance the prevention and treatment of diseases in people and animals. We foster a diverse and inclusive global workforce and operate responsibly every day to enable a safe, sustainable and healthy future for all people and communities.

In Canada, Merck markets a broad range of vaccines, pharmaceutical and animal health products and is one of the top R&D investors in Canada, with investments totaling \$92.84 million in 2022 and more than \$1.6 billion since 2000. Based in Kirkland, Québec, Merck employs approximately 635 people across the country. For more information about our operations in Canada, visit www.merck.ca and connect with us on [LinkedIn](#) @MerckCanada.

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