

A guide for patients – how to take the best photographs of your skin lesion or rash



Flash on

Flash off

1

Use a Background

- Backgrounds should be plain and unobtrusive providing no distraction from the area of interest. A background is only needed if the subject area does not fully fill the frame.
- When applicable, a background could be placed in contact with the skin to minimize shadows.

Good overhead lighting is ideal

- General office or household light may not always be sufficient to light an image. Consider using flash

2



Always take an establishing image followed by a close up

- If there are several skin lesions or multiple areas of skin affected, it can be difficult to distinguish between these if only close-up photographs are taken. For example, a mole on the arm may look similar to a mole on the leg.

Therefore, it can be useful to take low power photo(s) from a greater distance to show where the skin lesion or area involved is located on the body, as well as close ups.

- As well as the establishing image, a close-up image or a series of close-up images should be taken

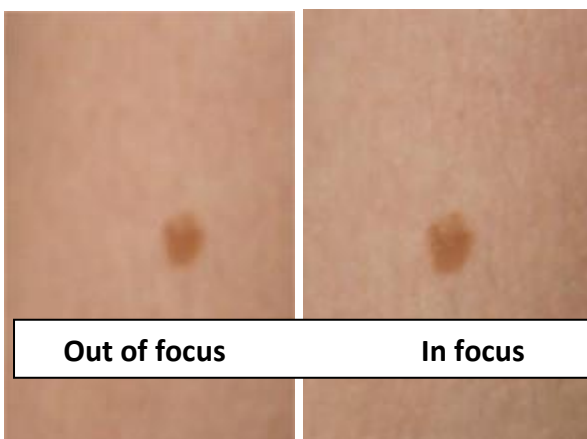
3



TAKE MORE THAN ONE IMAGE

- When taking a photograph, the camera needs to be parallel to the lesion.
- To demonstrate the size and shape of the lesion, you could consider taking additional image views, for example at an oblique angle

4



AUTO FOCUS ON THE LESION

- Images must be in focus for the dermatologist to review.
- Most smartphone cameras have a built-in auto-focus feature. You may need to wait a second for the auto-focus to find the lesion. If your camera is too close to the lesion this usually results in an out of focus photograph. Try zooming in from a bit further back.

5

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Always review your photos

Ensure your images have captured a good representation of the skin lesion or rash. Poor images will make it difficult for the Dermatologist to make a correct diagnosis.

5mb is the limit

Consider setting your camera or smartphone image resolution to a lower (e.g. medium) resolution. The size of any image sent must be less than 5MB.

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Send your photographs to the Dermatology Department at Poole Hospital using the following website <https://images.poole.nhs.uk>

We would like to thank University Hospital Bristol NHS Trusts for their kind permission to use photos which have been included in this guide.