

# A guide to taking the best photographs for teledermatology - for patients



**CLEAR BACKGROUND**      **UNCLEAR BACKGROUND**

## USE A BACKGROUND

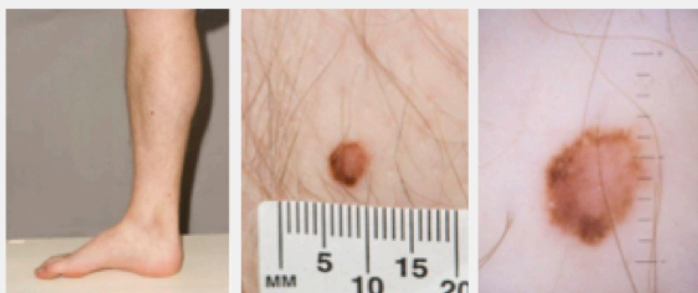
- Backgrounds should be plain and free from patterns, so there is no distraction from the area you need to take a photograph of.
- If possible, the background should be in contact with the part of the body in question so that there is no shadow.
- Use a light coloured sheet or light coloured painted wall as a background.



**FLASH ON**      **FLASH OFF**

## GOOD OVERHEAD LIGHTING IS IDEAL

- Think about using the flash on your phone.
- Move to an area with good outside lighting.
- Use a desk lamp or a torch to light up the area you need to photograph.



## ALWAYS TAKE AN ESTABLISHING IMAGE FOLLOWED BY ONE OR TWO CLOSE UPS

- This allows the doctor to clearly see the problem and where it is located on your body.
- If you have more than one area that your doctor has asked to see, take a photo of each area followed by a close-up of the problem area.

The images above show that the leg is where the problem is. There is a closer photo of the problem area and then a close-up of the problem area.

### Using a ruler to show size

If you can find a standard tape measure or ruler to put next to the problem area it will help to show the doctor the size of the problem.



### WHERE IS THE PROBLEM?

- These photos show that the problem is on the leg, and then show a closer photo of the area.
- You could also take a close-up photo of the rash or spots.



### YOU MAY NEED TO TAKE MORE THAN ONE PHOTO

- These examples show the problem area is on the thumb and use a piece of measuring tape to show the size.
- Next a closer photo of the problem was taken.
- Then there is another photo taken from the side.



OUT OF FOCUS

IN FOCUS

### AUTOFOCUS ON THE PROBLEM

- Your doctor needs to see a photo that is in focus and not blurry.
- Most smartphones have a built in auto-focus feature. You may need to wait for the phone camera to find the problem and focus.
- If your phone is too close to the area it will be blurry. **Try moving back from the area and zooming in.**

### CHECK YOUR PHOTOS

It is important that the photos you send to your doctor are clear and in focus. Check that they show the general area, then a closer photo and then another close up photo if it helps to show the problem more clearly.

**By sending photos to your doctor you are giving permission** for them to be shared with a specialist who will look at them and advise your doctor on how to care for you. The specialist **may** ask your doctor to book you an appointment with the specialist if this is better for your care. Your doctor will share information such as your **NHS number, name, age, gender and any health problems** you may have that the specialist needs to know about to be able to help you. The information will **only** be seen by healthcare staff who are trained in confidentiality and need to know the information.

**Please send your photos to your doctor as they have instructed.**

We would like to thank NHS Dorset CCG and University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust for their kind permission to use photos which we have included in this guide.