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Through routine skin exams designed to identify early signs of skin cancer, **Connolly Dermatology** helps patients stay protected, well-informed, and confident—looking and feeling their very best.

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The Beauty of Being Proactive

Through routine skin exams designed to identify early signs of skin cancer, **Connolly Dermatology** helps patients stay protected, well-informed, and confident—looking and feeling their very best. **by Bill Donahue**

Connolly Dermatology has multiple offices in Pennsylvania, including Jenkintown, Montgomeryville, Newtown Square, and Philadelphia.

Lauren Cincotta, PA-C, came of age down the Jersey Shore, meaning summers spent in the sand, surf, and sunshine. When it came time to choose a career path, Cincotta, a native of Mays Landing, New Jersey, chose to help others contend with the aftermath of “too much of a good thing”—in other words, to undo or mitigate the damage wrought by too much exposure to the sun.”

A physician assistant with Connolly Dermatology since 2008, Cincotta views her primary responsibility with the practice as rather straightforward, yet also quite profound: “finding skin cancer, treating skin cancer, and saving lives.”

“A lot of what we do here is prevention,” says Cincotta, who sees patients at Connolly Dermatology’s offices in Cape May, Linwood, and Marmora, New Jersey. “We can clean up but we can’t prevent. That’s why we educate people on the importance of wearing sunscreen, wearing protective clothing, and avoiding tanning beds.”

Cincotta first became familiar with Connolly Dermatology through her mother’s skin-cancer diagnosis and subsequent treatment. Now she helps other people protect their health by performing full-body skin checks as a form of surveillance to identify evidence of skin cancer, precancerous lesions, and other areas of

concern. She equates these full-body skin checks to “looking for ugly ducklings.”

“A skin-cancer check should be part of everyone’s routine, just like going to see a primary care doctor,” she adds. “I may do skin exams every day, but I have mine done by one of my colleagues here because it’s that important. Sun exposure and sun damage aren’t going anywhere, so we’re here to help clean up the mess the sun brought.”

Connolly Dermatology treats patients of all ages, at multiple locations throughout southeastern Pennsylvania, South Jersey, and Delaware. Founded by Coyle S. Connolly, D.O., nearly 30



Kierstin Kramer,
certified registered
nurse practitioner



Lauren Cincotta,
physician assistant



Jacqueline Bohanko,
physician assistant

years ago, the practice has expanded throughout the tri-state area to help a growing number of patients address a wide range of conditions pertaining to the skin, including the detection, diagnosis, and treatment of skin cancer.

Skin cancer is the most common type of cancer, according to the National Cancer Institute, with basal cell carcinoma being the most prevalent. If left untreated for too long, skin cancer can lead to disfigurement and even death. At Connolly Dermatology, early in-office detection and treatment options include Mohs surgery and superficial radiation therapy, also known as SRT, which can effectively treat existing cases of skin cancer and teach patients how to prevent future cancers.

Kierstin Kramer, AGPCNP-BC, a certified registered nurse practitioner who treats patients at two of Connolly Dermatology's Philadelphia offices, describes routine skin checks as "one of the simplest and most effective ways to protect your health."

"Being proactive rather than reactive is always a good way to think about your health," she says. "When patients come to one of our offices, they will find a calm, clean, professional environment, where the staff is friendly and approachable. We're here to ease your nerves about any issues you might be having with your skin, and to do so in an atmosphere that's efficient but personal."

"We want to build a lasting relationship with them and make sure they are aware of every step of their treatment plan," she continues. "If they ever have a question, I want them to feel comfortable reaching out to me, and I let them

know that. I'm here to ease the burden on them in any way I can."

The American Academy of Dermatology recommends beginning annual professional skin exams, as well as at-home self-checks, as early as age 30. Anyone who has a genetic predisposition or a history of severe sunburns or tanning-bed use should consider coming in even sooner, according to Jacqueline Bohanko, PA-C, a physician assistant who treats patients at Connolly Dermatology's offices in Jenkintown, Montgomeryville, and Philadelphia's Fishtown neighborhood.

She also recommends taking action whenever a patient has a specific area of concern—a suspicious spot, a sore that refuses to heal, or a change in the size, shape, or color of an existing mole. That said, signs of skin-cancer incursion can be quite subtle to the untrained eye. A patient might not even realize there's a problem until the cancer has progressed to a more serious stage.

"I had one middle-aged gentleman who came to see me for a rash on his neck, and while I was evaluating him, I noticed a suspicious lesion on his scalp," Bohanko adds. "It ended up being *lentigo maligna* (an early form of melanoma), and he had to have a surgical procedure to have it removed. Catching it early like that helps to ensure a positive outcome."

While Connolly Dermatology focuses primarily on the diagnosis and treatment of skin cancer, the practice does offer a range of cosmetic dermatology treatments. The practice's clinical team performs several in-house treatments, including neurotoxin injections such as

Botox, dermal fillers such as Juvéderm, as well as skin-revitalization services such as chemical peels. In addition, Connolly Dermatology offers access to a line of medical-grade, cost-effective skin-care products designed to help patients maintain at-home regimens with consistency.

No matter the need or the concern, the team at Connolly Dermatology stands ready to help patients better care for their skin. Cincotta says the practice prioritizes clear communication, making sure patients are always informed and engaged in their care—talking *to* patients, not *at* them. She believes this is especially important when formulating a treatment plan in the aftermath of a skin-cancer diagnosis.

"No one is immune to skin cancer," Cincotta adds. "In fact, we're finding melanoma in younger and younger patients. It's treatable, but if you aren't careful and you delay treatment, it's not always the same story in terms of the patient's outcome. A lot of patients come to us with an area of concern that turns out to be benign. Having that peace of mind is important, too, because we don't want anyone to be afraid." ■



For more information about Connolly Dermatology, including details about its convenient locations in Pennsylvania, South Jersey, and Delaware, visit www.connollydermatology.com or call (888) 377-5177.