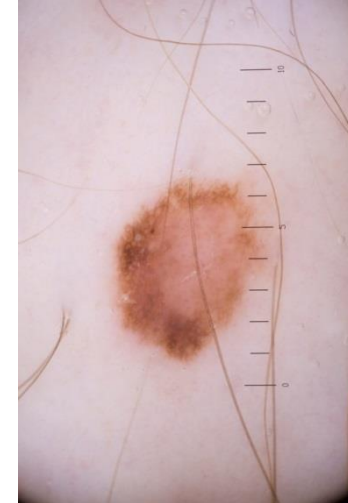


# A guide to taking better photographs

# Establishing and close up



**Always take an establishing image followed by a close up.**

Always take an establishing image to identify which part of the body you are photographing. If a patient has multiple areas of interest then it is difficult to distinguish between pictures if only close ups are taken. For example, a mole on a patient's leg may look similar to one on the **patient's arm**, so by taking an establishing image it helps avoid any confusion.

After taking the establishing image Next a close-up image or a series of close-up images should be taken.

As shown on the slide to document a mole on a patient's leg an establishing image has been taken of the entire foot and leg followed by a close up with a scale and an image with a dermatoscope.

# Take more than one image



**Take more than one close-up photograph.**

When taking the a photograph the camera needs to be parallel to the lesion. You should consider then taking any additional image views for example an oblique angle, to counter any loss of detail from the reflection of the flash. By taking this additional oblique photo at an angle it also allows the dermatologists to see if the lesion is raised.

On the slide the wart has been photographed from multiple angles to clearly show its shape and size.



Photographing a rash or a wide spread condition can be difficult. Try and show the distribution pattern and surface details by taking a series of photographs at different zoom settings.

Take a close up of the most affected areas rather than a close-up of every affected area. For rashes it is important to try and get as close as possible because the details are important – for example a lesion's crust and vascular pattern are important to a dermatologist.

Always make sure your camera's macro setting is on (On the Sony Cybershot it automatically switches on). Do not go beyond beyond the autofocus of the camera as your images will be out of focus and be mindful of the flash.

When photographing a patient with a full body rash take establishing images of as much as I could to show its distribution, then come in for close-ups of the most affected areas. If possible try and take an image of where affected skin meets the unaffected skin, as it can be used to measure how severe the rash is.

# Use a background



**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.

It is recommended that a sterile green cloth is used and placed in the bin after use however not everyone has access to these. Instead use blue disposable tissue roll, an empty pillow case, bed sheet or even a neutral wall or door.

Hands and feet are placed flat against the back ground on a flat surface. For larger areas a patient could stand in front of a neutral wall or door. It is recommended that you designate a wall in your treatment room which is free of posters, which this can be used as a background.

When applicable a background should be placed in contact with the patient in order to minimize shadows.

# Always use your flash



## Always use you flash

General office lighting is not sufficient to light an image and will result in your having camera shake. It is important to ensure that when you first turn on you camera that the flash is on, as this will help reduce camera shake.



When using the flash zoom in closer to the area of interest rather than moving your camera closer. This will result in even lighting and no hot spots, the flash has enough room to disperse evenly.

If your camera is too close to the lesion then the picture will have a hotspot like in this picture

# Auto focus on the lesion



## **Make sure that the autofocus is fixed on the lesion.**

Both of the Cybershot and D12 have auto focus. Before taking a picture make sure that the auto focus is fixed on the lesion of interest. You can do this by half pressing down the shutter button.

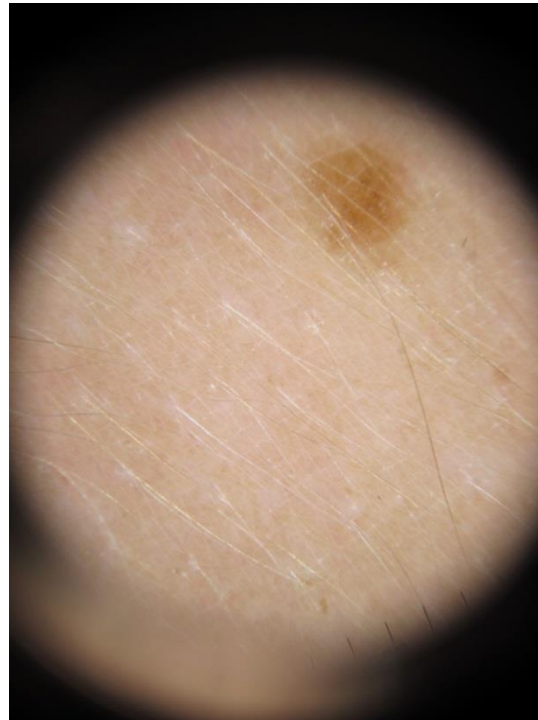
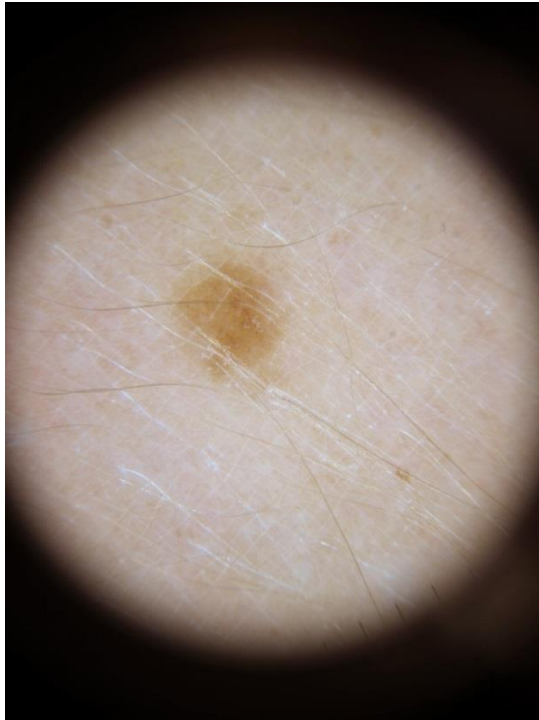
If the camera cannot focus then you are too close and you need to move further away.

When photographing lesions smaller than 2cm, do not fill the frame or go beyond the autofocus point of the camera. The temptation is to get as close as physically possible but it normally results in an out of focus picture.

If after moving the camera away you still cannot focus, then include a reference object such as a measuring scale in the same plane of focus as the lesion. This will help the auto focus find the lesion.

A dermatologist can enlarge a sharp image taken from further out, but cannot assess an out of focus one. Your images must be sharp if they are going to be of use to a dermatologist.





When using the dermatoscope on the Canon D12 I noticed that if the flash is kept on, it distorts the image. In the image on the right, the border is distorted whereas the image on the left in which the flash has been turned off, has no distortion.

# Conclusion

- Take an establishing & close up
- Take more than one image
- Use a background
- Always use your flash (except with the dermatoscope)
- Auto focus on the lesion and zoom in and check the focus
- Standardize you camera settings and regularly check them