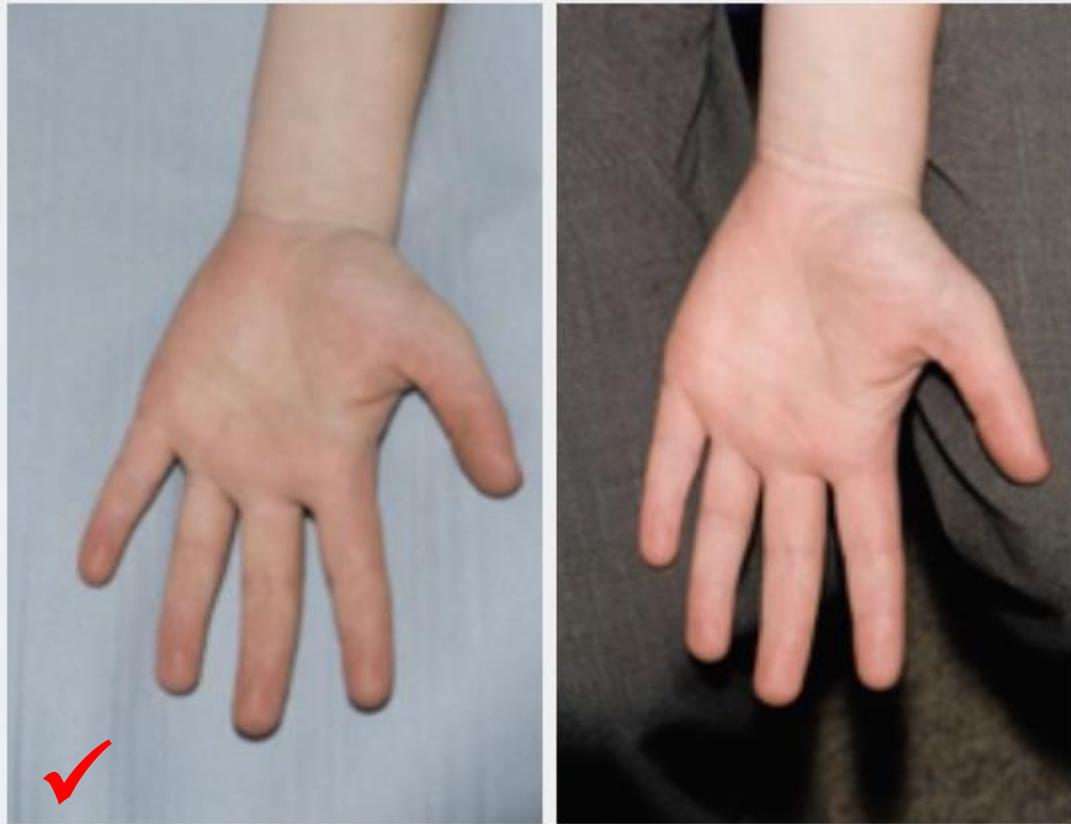


A GUIDE TO TAKING THE BEST PHOTOGRAPHS FOR TELEDERMATOLOGY: ADVICE FOR DOCTORS AND PATIENTS.



CLEAR BACKGROUND

UNCLEAR BACKGROUND

USE A PLAIN BACKGROUND

- The background should be plain and free from patterns so there is no distraction from the area that 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. White or pale green or pale blue works best.

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FLASH ON



FLASH OFF

GOOD OVERHEAD LIGHTING IS IDEAL

- Full daylight works best. Try moving to an area where daylight falls onto the area to be photographed.
- Use a flash
- General room lighting is not usually good enough, so use a desk lamp or torch to provide additional lighting.

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

- This allows the doctor to see the problem clearly, and to understand where it is located on your body
- If you have more than one area that your doctor has asked to see, take an establishing shot of each area followed by a close-up
- The images shown here demonstrate that the problem is on the leg, a closer photograph, and then a much closer shot.
- Use a ruler to show size: try to hold a tape measure or ruler next to the lesion to show the doctor the size of the problem.
- In the second set of photographs here, a closer shot of one of the spots would have been helpful.

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YOU MAY NEED TO TAKE MORE THAN ONE PHOTO

- These examples show that the problem area is on the thumb. A piece of measuring tape shows the size.
- Next, a closer photograph of the lesion has been taken
- A third photograph from the side shows how high the lesion is.

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USING AUTOFOCUS TO GET A BETTER IMAGE

- Your doctor needs to see a photo that is in focus, and not blurred. Most digital cameras and smart phones use autofocus. You may need to wait for the camera to focus.
- If your phone is too close to the area it will be blurry. If this happens, move back from the area and then use zoom to get a close-up.
- Focus is always better in very good lighting

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OTHER TOP TIPS:

- It is important the photographs that you send to a doctor for a diagnosis are clear and in focus. Check that they show the general area, a closer photograph and another close-up to show the problem clearly.
- **IMPORTANT: By sending photographs to your doctor you are giving them permission to be shared with a specialist.** If the photographs are sent to a specialist, they will look at them and advise your doctor how to care for you. The specialist may ask your doctor to book you an appointment. Your doctor will share information with the specialist such as your NHS number, name, age, gender, any other health problems, and any treatments that you are on.
- Any information that is passed on will only be seen by healthcare staff who are trained in confidentiality and need to know the information.

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.