Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

# Frequently Asked Questions About 3-D Total-Body Photography of Your Skin

This information answers commonly asked questions about 3-D total-body photography of your skin.

If you're having another type of 3-D photography, such as 3-D photography of only part of your body or before or after a plastic surgery, the information in this resource may not be accurate for you. Talk with your healthcare provider to learn what to expect before and after your 3-D photography.

## What is 3-D total-body photography?

3-D total-body photography is a way to make a 3-dimensional (3-D) photo record of the skin on your whole body. It uses multiple cameras and flashes to take pictures of your whole body at once. The cameras are all angled at a center point where you'll stand. A computer will then put the pictures together to make a detailed 3-D digital model of your body.

Your healthcare providers can rotate the 3-D model to look at your skin from different angles. They can also zoom in to look closely at your moles, skin lesions (areas of skin that aren't normal), or rashes.

## Why is 3-D total-body photography useful?

3-D total-body photography helps your healthcare providers keep track of your moles, skin lesions, or rashes over time. During your appointments, your healthcare provider will compare how your moles, skin lesions, or rashes look on your body to how they look on the 3-D model. This lets them see if they're changing.

Keeping track of your moles, skin lesions, or rashes over time helps your healthcare provider avoid taking unnecessary biopsies (tissue samples). It can also help them see how medications to treat your rash are working and know if they should change your treatment.

## How should I get ready for my 3-D total-body photography?

**Tell us if you have a seizure disorder or are very sensitive to flashing lights.** When your picture is taken, the flashes of all the cameras will go off at once. The light is very sudden and bright.

During your appointment, we'll give you a hospital gown.

We'll ask you to take off your clothing, hospital ID bracelet, face mask, and anything else that covers your skin. We'll also ask you to take off your makeup and jewelry and move your hair away from your neck, face, and ears. We'll give you a disposable hair band or cap if needed.

We recommend that you get fully undressed under the hospital gown. However, it's your choice to get fully undressed, wear disposable underwear that we give you, or wear your own underwear. You can store your belongings in one of our secure lockers or in the exam room.

## What will happen during my 3-D total-body photography?

A staff member will bring you to the photography room. The medical photographer will greet you and explain what to expect. They'll also show you where to stand and how to position your body for the picture.

Once you're comfortable, you'll take off your hospital gown and close your eyes. The medical photographer will check that you're in the right position. Once they're sure, they'll take your picture with all the cameras at once. It takes about 3 seconds. You can put your hospital gown back on right after.

## What will happen after my 3-D total-body photography?

After they take the 3-D photo of your body, the medical photographer will use a handheld camera to take pictures of any areas not shown in the 3-D photo. Examples include the soles of your feet, under your breasts, and areas between skin folds.

If your healthcare provider asked them to, the medical photographer will take a few more pictures of your rashes, suspicious moles, or skin lesions. These closer-up pictures will be linked to the matching location on the 3-D model of your body.

3-D total body photography takes about 20 minutes. You'll spend most of this time getting ready for the photos and getting dressed afterward.

If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

---

Frequently Asked Questions About 3-D Total-Body Photography of Your Skin - Last updated on August 4, 2021
All rights owned and reserved by Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center