

Pete's Story:

MELANOMA CAN STRIKE ANY OF US



“If you notice any change to your skin, get it cut out before it kills you.”

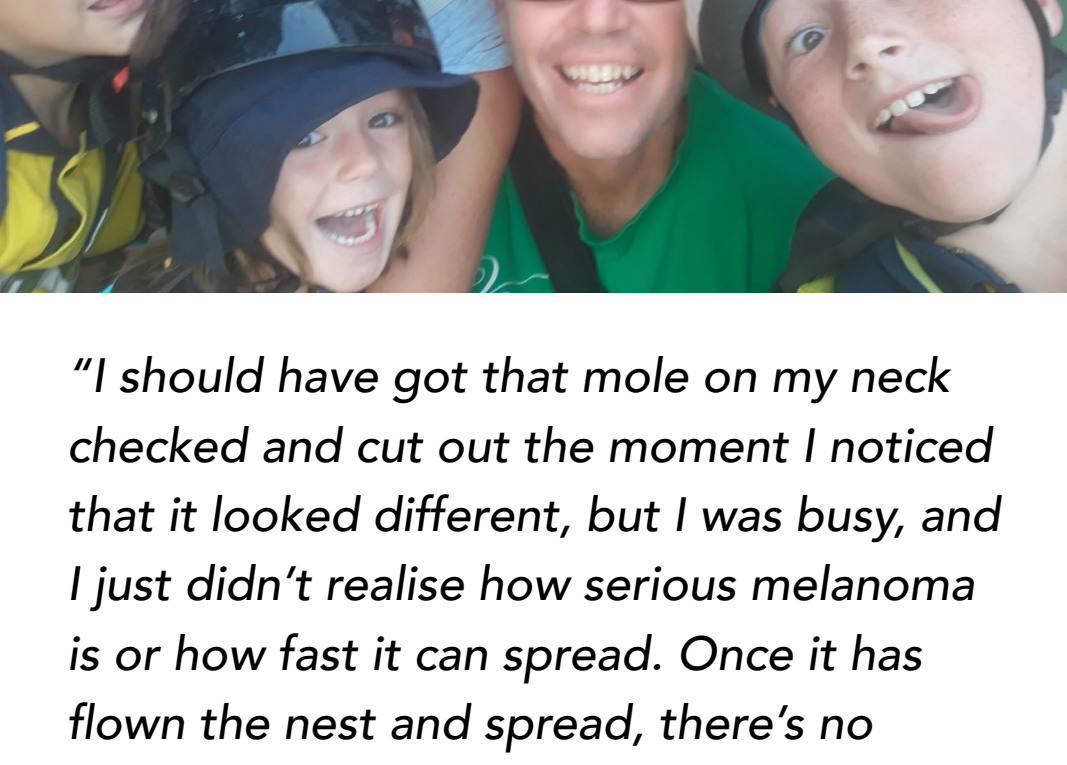
Pete Waters has a lot of moles and has always known that he needed to keep checking them.

Pete had a mole on his neck that had changed, and while he kept meaning to get it looked at, he was busy and put off going to the doctor.

He finally went to the doctor when he discovered a lump in his neck. The lump was removed, along with the mole, and he was diagnosed with stage three melanoma.

That was four years ago now, and after radiation treatment, he got on with his life. However, in 2019 he found out that his melanoma had spread to his lungs, with around 20 tumours. He then had surgery last year for two brain tumours, with further radiation treatment for a third brain tumour.

Pete is just 46 years old with everything to live for. He and his wife Alicia have three young children aged just 6, 8 and 10 years old.



“I should have got that mole on my neck checked and cut out the moment I noticed that it looked different, but I was busy, and I just didn’t realise how serious melanoma is or how fast it can spread. Once it has flown the nest and spread, there’s no putting it back.

“I honestly thought that with melanoma you get a mole removed and that’s that. When I tell people that I have tumours on my lungs and brain, they think I have lung or brain cancer. People just don’t understand how deadly this disease can be; they are shocked when I explain to them that my lung and brain tumours are actually melanoma that has spread from a simple mole on my neck.”

Pete’s message is simple,

‘If you notice any change to your skin, get it cut out before it kills you.’

Watch Pete’s Story

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“It’s tough on my wife Alicia, but she’s a legend and does what she needs to do. We haven’t told the kids about how serious this is, they don’t need to know that at their age, and I am really focused on living. I run a small trucking business, and I’m working hard to support my family and to put food on the table.

‘I continued to have treatment through the Covid-19 lockdown; I was in hospital for a whole week and that wasn’t great. I was supposed to start a clinical trial the day before the lockdown kicked in but that was put on hold. I am really hoping that it starts up again soon as I want every chance to spend more time with my family.

“I’ve spent my life working and playing outside and on the water. I wasn’t careful enough when I was younger, and now I am just the opposite with my own kids to make sure they are covered up and wear sunscreen.

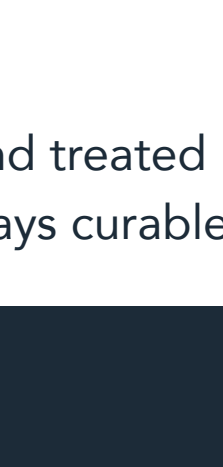


“I find it really hard when I see people, particularly young people, with sun burn; they don’t understand that they are risking their lives.

“Melanoma can strike any of us, and I’m telling my story in the hope that it will help more people understand how deadly serious it is, and that you just can’t delay going to the doctor to get skin changes checked out. The thing about melanoma is that if you get it early it can be treated and you can be cured,” says Pete.

Melanoma

New Zealand



Melanoma New Zealand is the only charity organisation dedicated to preventing avoidable deaths and suffering from melanoma

If melanoma is recognised and treated early enough it is almost always curable.