

# allure

THE BEAUTY EXPERT

AUGUST 2004

SPECIAL ISSUE!

LOVE  
YOUR  
HAIR

## 8 THE MOLE ON YOUR SHOULDER SEEMS TO BE GROWING.

An estimated 10,250 people will die from skin cancer this year, according to the American Academy of Dermatology—an especially alarming number considering that the disease has a one-in-five cure rate when detected early. Yearly checkups are crucial to catch lesions, which may hide on the lower back, the scalp, or between the toes, or masquerade as a patch of dry skin. “The difference between something and nothing can be quite subtle,” says **James Spencer**, vice chairman of the department of dermatology at Mount Sinai School of Medicine. “All skin cancers begin on the surface, where they’re both visible and harmless. You have to get to them before they start to grow downward.”

The scalpel still removes most skin cancers, but photodynamic therapy (topical Levulan followed by a light-based treatment), an option only for very superficial, early skin cancers, produces less-severe scars, according to a Pennsylvania State University study. And it’s now possible to treat precancerous cases (called actinic keratoses) with no scarring at all, using the topical cream Aldara, which was FDA-approved last spring. “This actually boosts the immune system where you apply it,” Spencer says.

## Perfect Skin Rx

Doctors’ Fast Cures  
For Spots, Redness, Lines,  
And Stray Hairs

## Hooked on Plastic Surgery

*One Woman’s Twisted Love Affair*

## NATALIE PORTMAN

Says She’s a Freak of Nature