

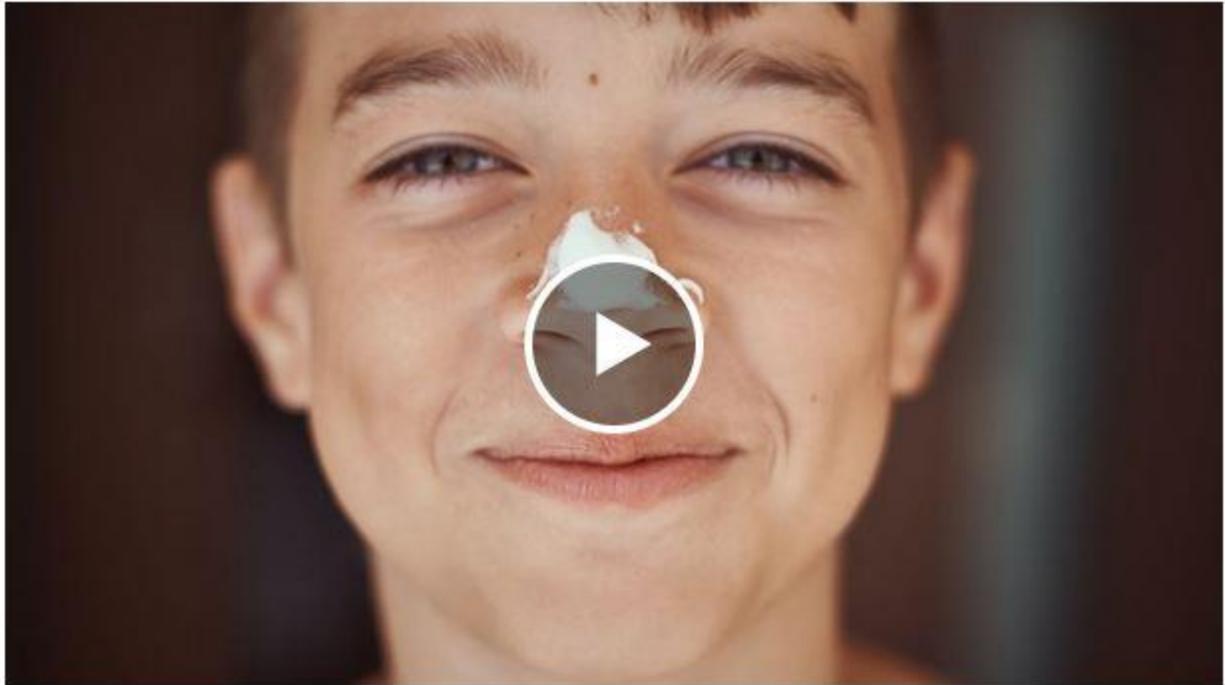
## Prevention

# 'RHOBH' Alum Teddi Mellencamp Reveals Stage 2 Melanoma Diagnosis

The star gets candid about her skin cancer diagnosis in a new Instagram post.



BY KORIN MILLER PUBLISHED: OCT 12, 2022

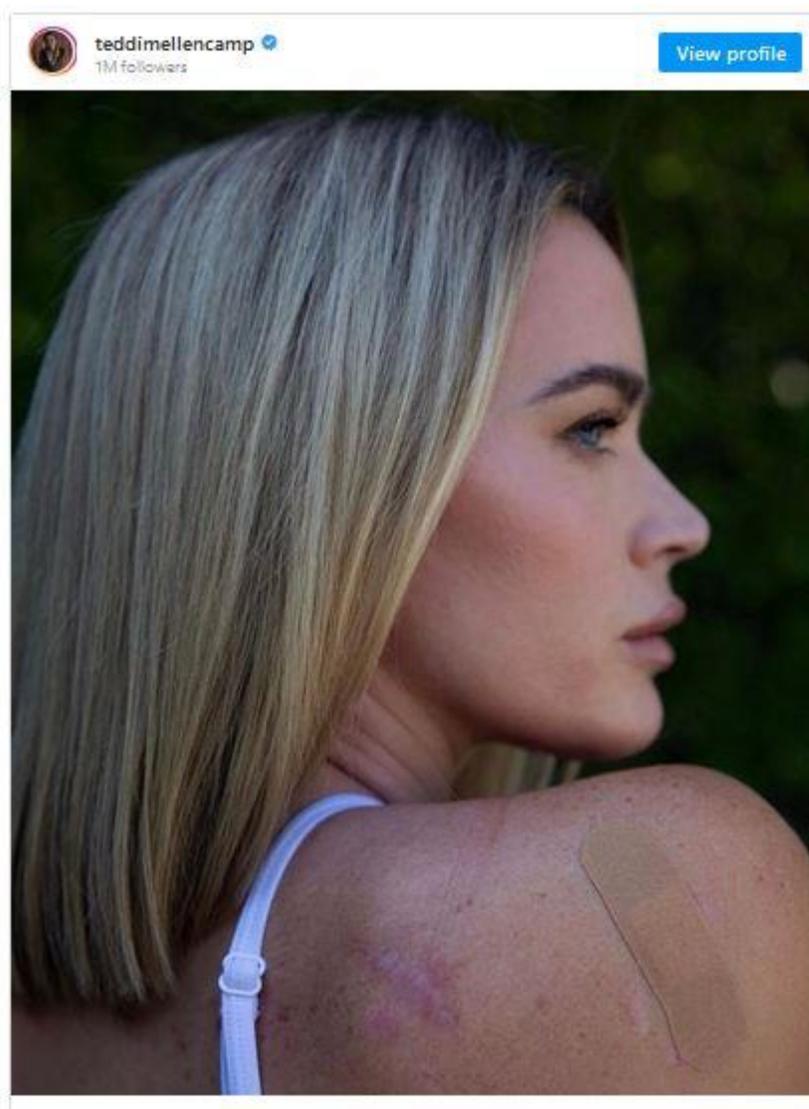


- Real Housewives of Beverly Hills alum Teddi Mellencamp has been diagnosed with melanoma, the most serious form of skin cancer.
- The 41-year-old shared the news of her diagnosis on Instagram.
- “This has been such a wake-up call for me, and I hope to all of you, to love and protect the skin you’re in,” she said of her diagnosis.

Real Housewives of Beverly Hills alum Teddi Mellencamp shared personal news with fans on Tuesday: She has melanoma, the most serious type of skin cancer.

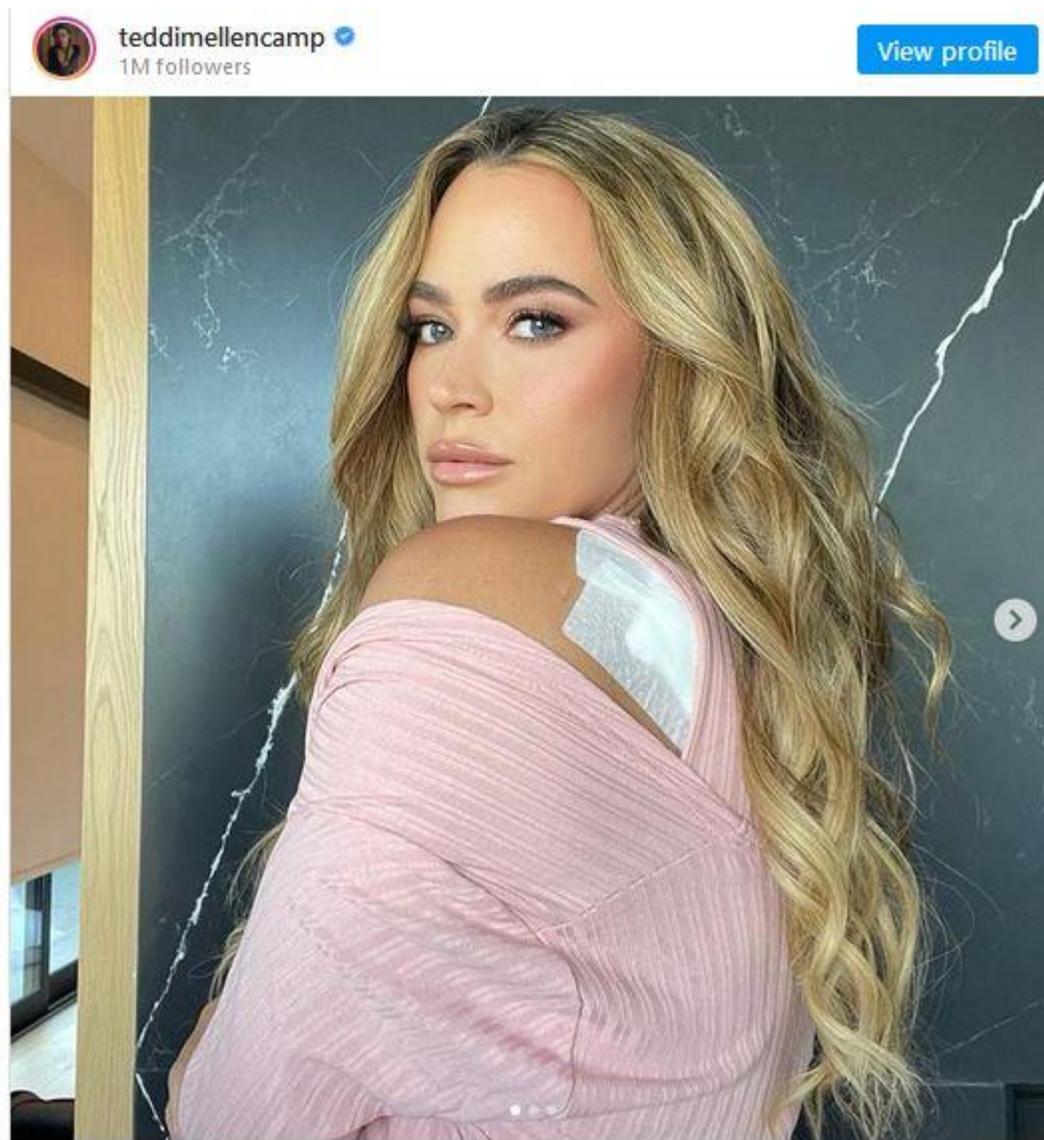
“Despite my anxiety, I listened to the doctors and went in for my three-month skin check last week since my previous melanoma,” the 41-year-old captioned an Instagram photo of her upper body, with a bandage on her shoulder next to a scar.

“They said I had another abnormal spot near my last one so they did a biopsy,” Mellencamp continued. “I got the call this morning: Stage 2 melanoma.” Mellencamp said that next week, she’ll see an oncologist “to have it cut out and come up with a game plan on next steps.”



Mellencamp then urged others to stay on top of their skin checks. “If a doctor says, ‘come in every three months,’ please go in every three months,” she said. “I so badly wanted to blow this off. ‘What could happen in three months?’ I thought. Apparently, a lot.”

Mellencamp shared in March that she had a mole removed from her back that appeared to be melanoma.



“I continue to share this journey because I was a ‘90s teen, putting baby oil and iodine on my skin to tan it,” Mellencamp said in her most recent post. “Never wearing sunscreen or getting my moles checked until I was 40 years old. This has been such a wake-up call for me, and I hope to all of you, to love and protect the skin you’re in.”

Mellencamp followed up her most recent post with an Instagram Story video of herself crying in the doctor’s office while waiting to be seen. “I’m facing my fears and making sure that I’m staying on top of these doctor’s appointments,” she says in the video, before reminding people to “go get your skin checked.”

## What is melanoma, exactly?

Melanoma, in case you’re not familiar, is the most serious form of skin cancer. Melanoma is much less common than other types of skin cancers but it’s also more dangerous because it’s more likely to spread to other parts of the body if it’s not caught and treated early, per the American Cancer Society (ACS). Just 1% of skin cancers are melanoma, but melanoma causes the majority of skin cancer deaths.

Melanoma develops when melanocytes—the cells that give the skin its tan or brown color—start to grow out of control, the ACS explains.

## Melanoma symptoms

In general, experts recommend following the ABCDE rule when looking at spots on your skin. According to the ACS, that breaks down to:

- **A is for Asymmetry:** Meaning, one half of a mole or birthmark does not match the other.
- **B is for Border:** The edges are irregular, ragged, notched, or blurred.
- **C is for Color:** The color of the spot is not the same all over and may include different shades of brown or black, or sometimes with patches of pink, red, white, or blue.
- **D is for Diameter:** The spot is larger than ¼ inch (the size of a pencil eraser), but melanomas can sometimes be smaller than this.
- **E is for Evolving:** The mole is changing in size, shape, or color.

Melanomas can have other warning signs, the ACS says, including:

- A sore that doesn't heal
- Spread of pigment from the border of a spot into the surrounding skin
- Redness or a new swelling beyond the border of the mole
- Change in sensation, like itchiness, tenderness, or pain
- Change in the surface of a mole—scaliness, oozing, bleeding, or the appearance of a lump or bump

## What is stage 2 melanoma?

Cancers are staged from 0 to 4, and stage 2 melanoma means that the tumor has penetrated the skin deeper than a millimeter, according to Mount Sinai. Melanoma at this stage has a high risk of spreading, the organization says.

“Stage 2 means it's not limited to the top layer of the skin—it's broken through and gone to the second layer of the skin,” says board-certified dermatologist Ife J. Rodney, M.D., founding director of Eternal Dermatology Aesthetics and professor of dermatology at Howard University and George Washington University.

## What does stage 2 melanoma look like?

It typically looks like any other melanoma, Dr. Rodney says. “Generally, a melanoma just looks like a melanoma,” she says. “We don't really do the staging until after you look at it under a microscope.”

## How is stage 2 melanoma treated?

Treatment for stage 2 melanoma is usually something called excision, Dr. Rodney says. “You cut out the melanoma, but also have a rim of regular skin that is removed,” she explains. “That way, you're sure you've gotten all of the melanoma.”

The edges of the tissue that's removed are tested to make sure they're free of melanoma, Dr. Rodney says. “For stage two melanoma, that treatment is usually enough,” says **Gary Goldenberg, M.D.**, a board-certified dermatologist in New York City.

But, “in some cases, a biopsy of a local lymph node may be necessary,” says Joshua Zeichner, M.D., director of Cosmetic & Clinical Research in Dermatology at Mount Sinai Hospital.

When melanoma is detected at a more advanced stage—stage 3 or 4—a patient would need chemotherapy “because it's no longer localized,” Dr. Rodney says.

With melanoma, “early detection is key,” Dr. Rodney emphasizes. She recommends seeing a board-certified dermatologist regularly for skin checks. “We can tell which are concerning and which are not so we can catch issues early.”

Mellencamp later shared Instagram Story videos of herself riding her Peloton and going on a horseback ride. “We are not alone in our pain—in our anxiety,” she wrote over one.

We’re wishing the celeb well and applaud her for reminding fans to get their skin checked.