

Skin Cancer Myths & Facts

Millions of Americans will be diagnosed with skin cancer annually and over 80,000 diagnoses will be melanoma, skin cancer's deadliest form.

Myth — It is impossible to get skin cancer in an area of the body that has never been exposed to the sun.

Fact — Sun exposure is a risk factor for developing skin cancer, these cancers can develop anywhere on the body regardless of direct sun exposure. The reasons why cancers develop are very complex and not entirely clear, involving both genetic and environmental factors. We do know that one or more sunburns doubles the risk for skin cancer.

Myth — If I have a growth or mole that has been there “forever,” it can't turn into a skin cancer.

Fact — Some melanomas develop as a new lesion, however many melanomas arise in preexisting moles that may be very familiar. It is important for you to become familiar with the growths on your body so that you are capable of recognizing any changes. Know the ABCDEs of melanoma.

Myth — Using sunscreen ensures I have 100% protection from the sun's rays.

Fact — Most people do not apply enough sunscreen to truly protect their skin for the amount of time they spend outdoors. One ounce of sunscreen may protect you for a maximum of 1.5-2 hours, depending on your skin type and activity level. Always remember to reapply your sun screen frequently and seek shade when possible.

Myth — I would know if I have a skin cancer on my body, wouldn't I?

Fact — Many people have no idea they have skin cancer. When melanoma is detected early, it is often 100% curable! Late detected melanomas are very often fatal, making them “silent killers.”

About Vitamin D

A Vitamin D deficiency is not an excuse to spend large amounts of time in the sun without the use of sunscreen.

Often depicted in the media, there is no doubt that Vitamin D is an essential nutrient. The fact is, most fair complected individuals can acquire sufficient Vitamin D through limited sun exposure.

As opposed to increasing sun exposure, the American Academy of Dermatology recommends that adequate amounts of Vitamin D should be obtained from a healthy diet (i.e. dairy products, fortified cereals and fish) and/or Vitamin D supplements.

American Cancer Society's 2013 Facts & Figures

Understanding Skin Cancer

Excessive ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun or synthetic UV radiation from indoor tanning devices, are the major contributors of skin cancer. All skin cancers are managed best when detected early.

What to Look for:

Any skin cancer can appear suddenly as a new spot or develop slowly in or near an existing spot. In fair complected men, melanomas are most often found between the shoulders and hips, or the head and neck area. In fair complected women, melanomas most often develop on the lower legs as well as between the shoulders and hips. **Any change in a spot needs the immediate attention of a Dermatologist.**

To see what melanoma looks like and to read more information about this deadly disease, visit:

www.melanomafoundation.com

**Be Vigilant, Watch Your Spots,
Don't Wait To See a Dermatologist!**

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**MELANOMA
KILLS ONE PERSON
EVERY 50 MINUTES!**

*Be Sun Safe
Learn to Protect Yourself
and Detect Skin Cancer.*

SUN SMARTS

Prevention and Early Detection of Skin Cancer

Seek, Slip, Slap, Slop, Style and Stay Six Ways to Protect Yourself from Skin Cancer

1. **Seek Shade** – Avoiding sun exposure, especially during the hours of 10am-4pm, when the sun's rays are the strongest.



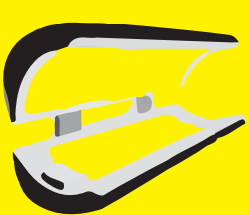
2. **Slip on Sun Protective Clothing** – Keep covered up while in the sun whenever possible.

3. **Slap on a Hat** – A hat with a wide brim will not only shade your face and neck from the sun's harmful rays, but will keep the rays from penetrating your hair and causing harm to your scalp.



4. **Slop on Sun Screen** – Apply a broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen and protective lip balm. Choose a sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher. Be sure to apply it 20 minutes before you are going to be in the sun and reapply it at least every two hours.

5. **Style with a Pair of Shades** – Your eyes are just as susceptible to the damaging effects of UV (ultraviolet) rays as the rest of your body. Make sure your sunglasses block both UVA and UVB rays.



6. **Stay out of tanning beds** – There is a 75% increase of developing melanoma, and non-melanoma cancer, for those who have been exposed to UV radiation from indoor tanning.

Recognize the **A, B, C, D, Es** of Skin Cancer

Both professional skin exams and skin self-examinations are useful in the early detection of skin cancer.

Any change in a mole requires the attention of a Dermatologist.

Regular visits to a Dermatologist can be life-saving, especially for those who are higher at risk.

Asymmetry **Borders** **Color** **Diameter**

Normal



Abnormal



Evolving



Asymmetry: When half of the mole or lesion does not match the other.

Borders: Melanomas often have blurred, notched, ragged or uneven edges.

Colors: Healthy moles are usually a single shade or color.

Diameter: Moles that grow larger than a pencil eraser are a cause for concern.

Evolving: Changing in any way: size, color, texture, sensation.



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