

How to Identify Potential Skin Cancers

There are three basic types of skin cancers, Basal Cell Carcinoma, Squamous Cell Carcinoma, and Melanoma.

Basal Cell Carcinoma –



Basal cell carcinoma is the most common form of skin cancer. There are more than 1 million new cases each year in the US. Basal cell skin cancer often

looks like a pale, wax-like, pearly nodule, or a red, scaly, sharply outlined patch. Most basal cell skin cancers are fairly easy to treat when detected early and are usually not life-threatening.

Squamous Cell Carcinoma –



Squamous cell carcinoma is the second most common form of skin cancer. There are more than 200,000 new cases each year in the US. Squamous cell

carcinomas often look similar to basal cell carcinomas. Generally, squamous cell skin cancer is not serious when identified early and treated promptly. If treatment is delayed then squamous cell skin cancers are harder to treat and can be fatal.

Melanoma –



Melanoma is the most serious form of skin cancer. There are over 60,000 new cases each year in the US. Melanoma is a malignant tumor in the cells that

produce pigment in the body. Most melanomas start as small, mole-like growths that increase in size, are black or brown in color and have uneven edges. Recognized and treated early, it is nearly 100 percent curable. But if it is not, the cancer can advance and spread to other parts of the body, where it becomes hard to treat and can be fatal.

For More Information:

National Cancer Institute
www.cancer.gov

The Skin Cancer Foundation
www.skincancer.org

American Cancer Society
www.cancer.org

Centers for Disease Control
www.cdc.gov

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SUN PROTECTION AND SUNSCREEN



REDUCE YOUR SKIN CANCER RISK



Sun Safe Facts

- Excessive exposure to sunlight or tanning beds causes skin cancer



- 1.2 million new cases of skin cancer in the U.S. each year
- Skin cancer accounts for half of all new cancers

- High risk individuals have fair complexion, but skin cancer can strike anyone
- Most damage done by the sun occurs before age 18
- Avoid sun exposure during its peak times, usually 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Using sunscreen reduces chance of getting skin cancer
- Wear protective clothing in addition to sunscreen.
- Make sure you wear sunglasses and a wide-brim hat. Choose clothing that has a tight weave or better yet wear special SPF clothing.



- The sun has three kinds of ultraviolet rays:
 - UVA - leads to skin aging and cancer
 - UVB - causes burning and cancer
 - UVC - can't pass through the ozone layer
- New research shows that UVA radiation is equally as dangerous as UVB.

Sunscreen Essentials

- Sunscreen is a lotion that protects you from the dangerous UV rays of the sun. UV rays damage the skin and cause skin cancer and wrinkles.
- A sunscreen's SPF (Sun Protection Factor) is a measurement of how well it protects against sunburn. An SPF 30 product provides 30 times more protection than bare skin.



- SPF only measures how well a sunscreen blocks UVB. There are no numbers that measure protectiveness against UVA.
- Choose a sunscreen that says "broad spectrum", "multi-spectrum" or "UVA/UVB protection". This helps protect against both UVA and UVB rays. Look on the ingredient list for avobenzone (aka Parsol 1789), titanium dioxide, zinc oxide, or oxybenzone. All of these ingredients shield against both types of rays.
- Always buy a product that has SPF 15 or higher and protects against both UVA and UVB rays. Many experts say that SPF 15 is plenty, but most people don't apply enough so an SPF 30 may only work as well as an SPF 15.
- Waterproof sunscreen protects you from the sun for up to 80 minutes in water. Water-resistant means you will only get 40 minutes of protection.



- If you have sensitive skin, use a product that says hypoallergenic on the label.
- Sunscreens should never be used past their expiration date, they become less effective. Discard any unused sunscreen at the end of the year and buy a new product.



- Clothing can be an effective sunscreen. Wear wide-brimmed hats and specially designed sun protection clothing.

Sunscreen Application Tips

In order to get maximum benefit from a sunscreen, make sure you apply it correctly. Follow these simple tips:

1. Apply 30 minutes before going outside.
2. Reapply every 2 hours and immediately after swimming, sweating, strenuous exercise, or toweling off.
3. "Test" sunscreen for allergic reaction by placing a small dab on the back of your hand. If you develop a rash or itching, stop using it! Call your doctor or pharmacist about using a different product.
4. Apply a thick, even layer over all exposed skin. Don't forget the neck, ears, scalp, face, and lips. Avoid eyes and eyelids.
5. Apply sunscreen year round even in the winter.
6. Sunscreen can be worn underneath make-up.