



Skin Cancer Facts

Over 1,000,000 people develop skin cancer every year.

Basal Cell Carcinoma – Appears as red and flat, pearly, raised or scar-like

- Slow but excessive amount of cell growth in the outer layer of skin, especially on the face and neck
- Easy bleeding
- Normally does not spread to other parts of the body

Squamous Cell Carcinoma – Appears as red, scaly patches on the face, neck and back of the hands

- Grows more quickly and can spread to other parts of the body through the bloodstream
- Can be cured with early detection and treatment

Melanoma – Forms from moles or brown spots on the skin that result from clustering of melanocytes, cells that give skin its color.

- Appears on the back and legs
- Most dangerous of all skin cancers

Risk Factors

- Prolonged exposure to the sun – Ultraviolet rays are the primary cause of skin cancer
- Geography – Melanomas are more common in areas closer to the equator where the sun is the strongest
- Skin tone – Fair-skinned people with red or blonde hair, blue, green or gray eyes, who burn rather than tan are at high risk
- History of outdoor work or considerable sunlight exposure
- Family history
- Unusual shaped or colored moles

Self Examination

Use a mirror or a friend to examine hard to see spots and plot each mole on a chart of your body. Make note of unusual colors, sizes or shapes. Take your self-exam record with you when you see your doctor for yearly check-ups. If you notice any of the following suspicious spots, see your doctor immediately.

Watch for Changes in:

- Color – shades of dark brown, black, red, white or blue
- Shape – development of irregular edges
- Size – sudden or continuous enlargement
- Elevation – previously flat moles that rise higher than surrounding skin
- Sensations – itching, tenderness or pain
- Surface – scaliness, erosion, oozing, crusting, ulceration, or bleeding
- Skin – redness, swelling, or spread of pigmentation

Prevention

Don't

- Expose yourself to sun between 10am – 4pm
- Use reflectors
- Use tanning beds
- Ignore dangers of UV rays on cloudy days
- Mix certain drugs and sun exposure

Do

- Use sunscreens
- Periodic self-examinations
- Wear protective clothing
- Protect your eyes
- Protect your lips