



Skin Cancer Diagnosis and Prevention

All people, regardless of their skin type are at risk for developing skin cancer. Those with a history of skin cancer are at risk for developing more. When looking at your skin, be aware of the following warning signs that could be an indication a growth may be cancerous.

- A new growth on an adult that does not disappear within four to six weeks
- A skin lesion that grows larger and turns pearly, translucent, brown, black, or multi-colored
- A mole, birthmark or beauty mark that grows larger, changes color, texture or shape
- An open sore or wound that doesn't heal for more than 4 weeks or heals and then reopens or recurs
- A skin spot or growth that scales, scabs, oozes, erodes or bleeds for several weeks
- A growth with changes in sensation such as itching, burning, pain or tenderness
- Any worrisome skin lesion

Sun *PROTECT*-ion Strategies

Enhance your SkinIQ and use the mnemonic *PROTECT* to remember the important components of our sun protection strategies for the early detection and/or prevention of skin cancer.

*P*rotect yourself from the sun

- Generously apply a broad-spectrum sunscreen, SPF 30 or greater, covering UVA and UVB rays at least 15-30 minutes prior to sun exposure
- Cover all sun exposed areas including your lips
- Re-apply sunscreen every 2 hours and after swimming, sweating, or exercising
- Wear sun protective clothing (long sleeved shirts, pants, broad brimmed hats, sunglasses) when planning on being outdoors for extended periods of time or have any of the risk factors below
- **The best sunscreen is the one you remember to use every day**

*R*isk Factor Awareness

Risk factors for the development of skin cancer include but are not limited to:

- Increased age
- Fair skin-type that burns/freckles easily and tans poorly
- History of sunburns and excessive sun exposure
- Past history of skin cancer or pre-cancerous lesions
- Family history of skin cancer
- Presence of atypical moles or numerous moles
- Damaged skin (scars, burns)
- History of radiation exposure
- Environmental exposure to hazardous chemicals
- Compromised immune system (organ transplant recipients, leukemia/lymphoma, medications, HIV, among many others)



O utdoor activity planning

- The sun's rays are most intense between the hours of 10 am and 4 pm
- Remember the **4 S's**...If your **S**hadow is **S**horter than you then **S**eek **S**hade
- Plan for outdoor activities either early in the morning or later in the evening to avoid the sun's strongest rays even when you can't see the sun
- Even on cloudy days, the majority of ultraviolet rays reach the ground
- Snow, water and sand reflect UV rays and increase the chance of sunburn

Tanning bed avoidance

- People who use tanning beds are at higher risk for developing skin cancers such as basal cell carcinoma, squamous cell carcinoma, and malignant melanoma
- Tanning beds are **NOT** a safer way to tan...Tanning represents the skin's response to sun damage

Examine your skin monthly

- You should examine your skin monthly to observe for any new growths or changes in existing moles or growths on the skin

Consult your dermatologist at least once per year

- It is important to consult with a dermatologist at least once per year even if you don't have any of the above risk factors for skin cancer. Your dermatologist can complete a thorough history and physical exam to determine your skin's health and proper maintenance

Take your skin seriously!

- **SUN PROTECTION SAVES LIVES**
- Over 1 million new cases of skin cancer are diagnosed each year, some of which are a significant cause of morbidity and mortality
- Take your skin and these sun protection strategies seriously to minimize your risk for developing skin cancer and other sun related skin conditions

If you have any questions or concerns, or experience any of the above warning signs, please call us immediately. We are happy to speak with you any time at **(941) 867-DERM**