

The CORE

SKIN PROTECTION AND SUN SAFETY

Few realize the most common cancer in the United States is skin cancer, accounting for almost half of all cases. Although skin cancer can be fatal, it is easily treated if caught early. Be on the lookout for:

- ☀ Change on the skin, especially in the size or color of a mole or spot, or a new growth.
- ☀ Roughness, bleeding or other discharge.
- ☀ The spread of coloring beyond the mole's or mark's border.
- ☀ A change in sensation: itchiness, tenderness, or pain.

Who's affected?

All of us are at risk of skin cancer, but some have a higher risk than others. Be extra careful if you:

- ☀ Have lots of moles, irregular moles, or large moles.
- ☀ Have freckles and burn before tanning.
- ☀ Have fair skin or blond, red, or light brown hair.
- ☀ Have a family history of skin cancer or were previously treated for it yourself.
- ☀ Live or vacation at high altitudes live or vacation in tropical or subtropical climates.
- ☀ Spend a lot of time outdoors, especially if you work indoors all week and then get a tan on weekends.
- ☀ Have had an organ transplant.
- ☀ Have an autoimmune disease or take medicines that lower your immunity.
- ☀ Take birth control pills. Other prescription drugs also increase risk. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if this applies to any medications you take regularly.

Proactive prevention is the key to a happy, healthy life.

Minimize sun damage to reduce your risk:

- ☀ Apply a palm-full of sun block of SPF 15 or higher every day. Reapply mid-day or after an hour if sweaty or wet. Help kids do the same, although do not apply to babies under 6 months.

Restrict their sun exposure, and cover them with clothing, hats and blankets instead.

- ☀ Limit sun exposure 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., even on cloudy days.
- ☀ Cover your body and limbs with lightweight, comfortable, dry clothing. Darker, tightly-woven fabrics block the most damaging rays.
- ☀ Wear a wide-brimmed hat (at least 2-3" around all sides).
- ☀ Wear sunglasses that block 99-100% of UVA and UVB rays.
- ☀ Avoid tanning beds and sunlamps. Try sunless tanning products instead.