



Skin Cancer Fact Sheet

❖*The three major types of skin cancer are: basal cell carcinoma, squamous cell carcinoma, and melanoma.*❖

Basal cell carcinoma (BCC)

- Caused primarily by chronic sun exposure
- May appear as a small, shiny red, pink, or white bump; persistent non-healing sore; flat reddish patch; or a scarlike white or yellowish area
- Occurs most commonly on sun-exposed areas, including the face, ears, neck, scalp, shoulders, and back
- Most common type of skin cancer; 80% of all skin cancer cases-approx. 800,000 new cases in America each year
- Usually doesn't metastasize (spread) unless left untreated for a long time

Squamous cell carcinoma (SCC)

- Caused primarily by chronic sun exposure
- Appears as red, scaly patches or bumps
- Occurs most often on sun-exposed areas, such as the face, neck, bald scalp, ears, hands, shoulders, arms, and back
- Second most common form of skin cancer; 16% of all skin cancer cases-approx. 200,000 new cases in America each year
- Can metastasize and be fatal if left untreated
- Actinic keratoses, or "pre-cancers," are scaly, red patches on the skin that may feel a little like sandpaper. If Actinic keratoses (AKs) are left untreated they may develop into a Squamous cell carcinoma. Actinic keratoses affect more than 10 million Americans.

Melanoma

- A number of factors may contribute to melanoma, including family history, sun exposure, fair skin, red hair, blue eyes, and atypical or a lot of moles.
- Usually melanoma lesions exhibit one or more of the following: asymmetry, jagged or blurred borders, very dark colored or multi-colored, larger than 6mm in diameter. If a mole changes in any way, itches, bleeds, or is tender or painful, this is cause for concern and you should see a dermatologist.
- Can occur anywhere on the body, but most commonly occurs on the trunk, legs, and arms
- Least common, but deadliest form of skin cancer; an estimated 62,100 cases of invasive melanoma are expected to be diagnosed in 2006
- If detected and removed early, melanoma is almost 100% curable. If it metastasizes, it is very difficult to treat and is almost always fatal.



❖Some Statistics on Skin Cancer❖

1. Skin cancer (melanoma and non-melanoma) is the most common form of cancer and the incidence of all types of skin cancer is increasing every year.
2. One in five Americans will get some form of skin cancer in his/her lifetime. In 2006, at current rates one in 32 Americans has a lifetime risk of developing melanoma and one in 60 Americans has a lifetime risk of developing *invasive* melanoma.
3. In the U.S., an estimated 10,710 people will die from skin cancer in 2006, 7,910 from melanoma and 2,800 from non-melanoma skin cancer. World wide 60,000 people will die, 48,000 deaths occur every year from melanoma, and 12,000 deaths occur from non-melanoma skin cancers.
4. Both squamous cell carcinoma and basal cell carcinoma have a better than 95% cure rate if detected and treated early.
5. For localized melanoma (limited to primary lesion), the 5-year survival rate is 98%; the 5-year survival rate for regional melanoma (in lymph nodes nearest lesion) is 64%, and for distant melanoma (spread to other parts of body), the 5-year survival rate is 16%.

❖You can take the following steps to protect yourself from skin cancer. ❖

1. Avoid unnecessary UV exposure from the sun and tanning beds.
2. Use a sunscreen/sunblock of SPF 30 or higher that contains zinc oxide. Apply liberally and uniformly, and reapply every 2-3 hours, including after swimming or sweating
3. Wear protective clothing, such as long pants, long-sleeved shirts, broad-brimmed hats, sunglasses, or specialty sun-protective products. Rit Sunguard is a laundry treatment that prevents 96% of harmful UVA & UVB rays from penetrating clothing.
4. Perform monthly self skin exams, and notify your physician of any suspicious changes.
5. Get a yearly total body skin exam by a physician/dermatologist.

References

American Cancer Society: Cancer Facts & Figures 2006. Skin Cancer Facts.

American Academy of Dermatology: 2006 Skin Cancer Fact Sheet. Actinic Keratoses and Skin Cancer: How are they Different?.

www.cancerpage.com/news/article.asp?id=9947 Sun Overexposure Kills 60,000 a Year, Worldwide, 8/21/2006