

Quick Facts

- Most common of all cancer types
- More than 3.5 million skin cancers diagnosed yearly in the U.S., more than all cancers combined!
- 1 in 5 Americans will develop skin cancer in their lifetime

Risk Factors

- Exposure to excessive UV radiation i.e. sun, tanning lamps and beds
- Light or fair skin
- Sunburns
- Family history of skin cancer
- Many, irregular, or large moles
- Spend a lot of time outdoors
- Take medications that make your skin more sensitive to sunlight
- Have freckles and burn before tanning
- Work indoors all week then get intense sun exposure on the weekends

What is Skin Cancer?

Skin cancer is a cancer that starts in the skin. Some other types of cancer start in other parts of the body and can spread to the skin, but these are not skin cancers. There are two main types of skin cancer:

1. Basal and Squamous Cell Skin Cancers

- Most common
- Found mainly on parts of the body exposed to sun (i.e. head and neck)
- Strongly related to amount of sun exposure
- Less likely to spread to other parts of the body

2. Melanomas

- Can occur anywhere on the body
 - Chest and back are the most common site in men
 - Legs are the most common site in women
- More serious, more likely to spread



How Do I Protect Myself?

- Seek the shade, especially from 10 am – 4 pm
- Do not burn
- Avoid tanning and UV tanning booths
- Cover up, including broad-brimmed hats and UV blocking sunglasses
- Use a broad spectrum sunscreen with SPF 15 or higher every day
- Examine your skin at least once monthly and look for the following:
 - **Asymmetry:** one half of mole does not match other half
 - **Border irregularity:** edges of mole are irregular, ragged, blurred or notched
 - **Color:** color of mole is not the same all over
 - **Diameter:** mole is larger than about 1/4th inch
- See your physician every year for professional skin exam

What If I Find Something Suspicious?

Be sure to show your doctor any area that concerns you. If your doctor suspects you might have skin cancer, he or she will do exams and tests to find out. Skin cancers found and removed early are often curable.

<http://www.skincancer.org/>

<http://www.cancer.org/cancer/cancercauses>