

SKIN CANCER

For more information,
please contact:

AMC Cancer Research Center's
Cancer Information & Counseling Line
1-800-525-3777

AMC CANCER RESEARCH CENTER IS A MEMBER OF:



We see a world without cancer
A national, not-for-profit research institute
dedicated to the prevention of
cancer and other chronic diseases.

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1-800-321-1557

WORK, REST OR PLAY IN A SUN-SAFE WAY!

Without the sun, life simply could not exist. It provides warmth and light to us and our environment. However, the sun's rays also can be harmful. Overexposure to the sun's ultraviolet radiation (UV) can damage skin and eyes. The effects of sun damage include freckling, tanning, sunburning, wrinkling, cataracts and skin cancer.

Skin cancer is by far the most common cancer in the United States with more than one million new cases diagnosed each year. It is also one of the fastest rising cancers. It has reached epidemic proportions, especially in the Southwest. Arizona, for example, has the highest incidence of skin cancer in the United States and the second highest rate of skin cancer in the world behind Queensland, Australia.



*Finding
it early
can save
your life*

*Information
on early
detection
provided by*



- Apply sunscreen liberally over all exposed skin areas.
 - Choose a sunscreen with a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) 15 or greater.
 - Choose broad-spectrum sunscreens that block both UVA and UVB.
 - Choose water-resistant sunscreens that will not wash off as easily.
 - Reapply sunscreen every two hours and after swimming or sweating.
 - Apply sunscreen 30 minutes before going out in the sun.
- 3** **Wear cover-up clothing.**
 - Wear clothing that covers the most skin, such as long-sleeved shirts with collars, long pants, sun-safe swim suits, socks and shoes.
 - Choose tightly knit fabrics that have fewer or smaller holes between the threads.
 - Choose darker colors of fabrics because they absorb UV better.
 - Choose heavier-weight fabrics because they tend to block more UV.
 - Wear UV-blocking sunglasses.
 - Wear wide-brimmed hats with at least a 3" brim or a legionnaires hat with a flap in the back.

- 1** **Access the Daily UV Index.**

The EPA and the National Weather Service have developed the UV Index. This index indicates the likely level of exposure to UV rays for a particular city on a given day. The UV Index is on a scale of 0 to 10+, where 0 indicates a minimal likely level of exposure to UV rays and 10+ means a very high level of exposure.

Access the daily UV Index Forecast for your city via the Internet or your local newspaper. Take more sun safety precautions on days with higher UV index values.
- 2** **Limit time in the sun.**
 - UV is most intense between the hours of 10 a.m. and 3 p.m., so plan outdoor activities before or after peak sun intensity hours.
 - Limit your time in the sun all year round. UV can penetrate through clouds and snow reflects UV back at you.
 - If you must be outdoors during peak sun hours, use shade or find shaded areas. Umbrellas, trees, ramadas, and shadows from buildings are good sources of shade.
- 4** **Use sunscreen every day.**

WHAT ARE THE RISK FACTORS?

- **Your Family History**
People with a family history of skin cancer have a greater risk of developing it themselves.

- **Your Physical Characteristics**
People with fair skin and light blue or green eyes and those who have red or blonde hair and freckle easily have a greater risk of developing skin cancer.

- **Your Environment**
People who live, work or play closer to the equator, at higher altitudes, and in locations with many dry, sunny days have a higher risk of sun exposure, sunburn and skin cancer. Mountains have some of the most intense UV on Earth. At an altitude of 10,000 feet, UV is 50% more intense than at sea level. Also, the thinning of the Earth's protective ozone layer increases everyone's UV exposure.

Even though you may not be able to control your skin type or where you live, you can control your ability to be safe in the sun. Most skin cancer is caused by over-exposure to UV.

By reducing your sun exposure you can help prevent skin cancer. You and your family should be aware of the risks of too much sun exposure and adopt simple sun safety practices to prevent serious health problems.

Remember:
Early detection of skin cancer can save your life.