



Skin Cancer – What You Should Know!

Sun Safety Saves Lives

Skin cancer is the most rapidly increasing cancer in the United States and the sixth leading cause of cancer death in Nevada. The most likely reason that skin cancer rates are rising is that people are spending more time outdoors. Ozone layer depletion may also be a contributing factor to the increase in rates.

Facts:


- Skin cancer is the most common of all types of cancers in the U.S.
- Each year almost 300 Nevadans will be diagnosed with melanoma and approximately 60 will die from the disease.
- 90 percent of early-stage skin cancers can be removed.
- Even the most serious form of skin cancer, malignant melanoma, has a 5-year survival rate of more than 95 percent when found early.
- More men get - and die from - skin cancer than do women.
- Because of the state's high elevation, Nevadans are exposed to increased levels of radiation from the sun (UV).
- The UVA rays released by tanning lamps are often much more intense than those produced by the sun.
- The rays from the tanning beds enter deeper into the skin, thus thinning the skin and making it less able to heal.
- Regular tanning can cause early aging.

Risk Factors:

Anyone can develop skin cancer; however, there are known risk factors:

- Unprotected and/or excessive exposure to UV rays. (Refer to the chart below to see your skin type)
- Occupational exposures to coal, tar, pitch, creosote, arsenic compounds or radium.
- Family history of skin cancer.
- Severe sunburns as a child.
- Regular use of tanning beds.
- Multiple or atypical moles.
- Received radiation therapy for a cancer as a child.
- On immunosuppressive therapy after organ transplantation

TYPES OF SKIN

-  **Type I** - Always burns; never tans; sensitive ("Celtic")
-  **Type II** - Burns easily; tans minimally
-  **Type III** - Burns moderately; tans gradually to light brown (Average Caucasian)
-  **Type IV** - Burns minimally; always tans well to moderately brown (Olive Skin)
-  **Type V** - Rarely burns; tans profusely to dark (Brown Skin)
-  **Type VI** - Never burns; deeply pigmented, not sensitive (Black Skin)

Reducing Your Risk:

The best ways to lower your risk of skin cancer are:

- Avoid the sun and seek shade between 10 am and 4 pm.
- Wear light-weight protective clothing to cover as much skin as possible.
- Use sunblock with sun protection factor (SPF) 30 or higher even on overcast days. Reapply every 90 minutes using one ounce of sunblock per body part.
- Cover your head with a wide-brimmed hat. Protect your ears and neck with sunblock.
- Wear sunglasses with 99 percent to 100 percent UV absorption.
- Avoid sun tanning and tanning beds

PARENTS: By protecting your children, you are teaching them good habits in the sun and can substantially lower their risk of ever getting skin cancer.

Early Detection:

Examine your skin regularly and use a mirror for hard-to-see places. Look for the warning signs of skin cancer:

- A = Asymmetry.** Does one half of the mole look different than the other half?
- B = Borders.** Are the mole's edges ragged or not clearly defined?
- C = Color.** Is the mole more than one color or changing colors?
- D = Diameter.** From edge to edge, is the mole larger the size of a pencil tip eraser?
- E = Evolving.** Have any of your moles changed in size, diameter, color or thickness?

See your doctor immediately if you answered "YES" to any of these questions.

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