

SKIN CARE

& CANCER AWARENESS



No one is safe from skin cancer. Some people only think of protecting themselves while spending a day in the sun at the pool, or on vacation at the beach or lake. However, exposure to ultraviolet (UV) rays adds up over time, which can cause damage to your skin cells and sometimes can lead to cancer. Skin cancer is

now the most common of all cancers, with approximately 5.4 million new cases to be diagnosed this year in 3.3 million Americans (most people are diagnosed with more than one type of skin cancer). There are three primary types of skin cancer: basal cell carcinoma, squamous cell carcinoma, and melanoma. The American Cancer Society estimates that out of those

newly diagnosed skin cancers, 87,110 Americans will be diagnosed with melanoma, with nearly 9,730 deaths from the disease. In Arizona, more than 2,000 cases of melanoma will be diagnosed in 2017, and cause more than 250 deaths. That's the bad news. The good news is, there is a lot you can do to protect yourself and your family from skin cancer.



TYPES OF SKIN CANCER

The skin is the largest organ of the human body. There are three primary types of cells in the top layer of the skin (called the *epidermis*): Squamous cells: These cells are located in the outer part of the epidermis. They shed constantly as new cells form. Basal cells: Basal cells are in the lower part of the epidermis, and constantly divide to form new cells to replace the squamous cells that wear off the skin's surface. Melanocytes: These cells create the brown pigment melanin, which gives the skin its tan or brown color. Melanin acts as the body's natural sunscreen, protecting the deeper layers of the skin from some of the harmful effects of the sun. For most people, when skin is exposed to the sun, melanocytes make more of the pigment, causing the skin to tan or darken. The epidermis is separated from the deeper layers of skin. When a skin cancer becomes more advanced, it generally grows into the deeper layers. Most skin cancers are non-melanoma, and develop on sun-exposed areas of the body. Depending on the type, they can be slow or fast growing, but they rarely spread. Most skin cancers are either basal-cell or squamous-cell cancers. They are less likely to become deadly. Melanoma is less common, but a much more serious cancer. If detected early, melanoma is usually curable, however it can spread to other parts of the body. Once melanoma cells reach vital organs and grow, they are harder to treat and less likely to be curable.

TYPES OF SKIN CANCER

BASAL CELL CARCINOMA

Basal cell carcinomas are not only the most common type of skin cancer; they are the most common type of cancer in humans. Approximately eight of 10 skin cancers are basal cell carcinoma. Basal cell carcinomas form in the lowest level of the epidermis, or top layer of skin. They tend to grow slowly and it's rare for basal cell carcinoma to spread to other parts of the body. If a basal cell carcinoma is not completely removed, it can recur in the same spot on the skin. People diagnosed with basal cell carcinomas are also more likely to get new skin cancers in other places.

SQUAMOUS CELL CARCINOMA

Squamous cell carcinomas are not as common as basal cell but they still account for about two out of 10 skin cancers. Squamous cell carcinomas form in the outer layers of the skin, and can grow into deeper layers and spread to other parts of the body, although it is still rare.

MELANOMA

Melanoma is a cancer that starts in the melanocytes. Melanomas can form anywhere on the body, but are most likely to form on the chest and back in men, and on the legs in women. Other common areas for melanomas to form are on the face and neck. Melanoma may start on the skin without warning, or they may start in or near moles and other dark spots on the skin. Melanoma cells can still make melanin, which is why these cancers can have mixed shades of brown, tan, black, or even blue.



RISK FACTORS

GENDER

Men are about twice as likely as women to have basal cell cancers and about three times as likely to have squamous cell cancers of the skin.

IMMUNE SYSTEM SUPPRESSION

People with weakened immune systems are at an increased risk of developing skin cancer.

AGE

The rate of skin cancers increases with age but these cancers, especially melanomas, can be found in younger people. The average age of diagnosis is 61. Before age 45, the risk of melanoma is higher for women; after age 45, the risk is higher in men.

RACE

Because most skin cancers are caused by overexposure to UV radiation, everyone is at risk for skin cancer. Whites with fair skin that freckles or burns easily are at especially high risk. The lifetime risk of melanoma is higher for whites than for African Americans because of the protective effect of skin pigment, but no one is safe from developing skin cancer.

ULTRAVIOLET RADIATION & SUNBURN

People with excessive exposure to tanning booths or sunlight are at greater risk for skin cancer. If a person has had severe, blistering sunburns, especially in their childhood or teenage years, that person has an increased chance of developing skin cancers later in life.

FAMILY HISTORY

Melanoma runs in some families, and the risk is greater if one or more person's first-degree relatives have been diagnosed. This may be due to a family lifestyle of frequent sun exposure, having fair skin, inheriting a gene mutation, or a combination of factors.



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PREVENTION

Many skin cancers can be prevented by limiting unprotected exposure to the sun, and never using tanning beds or sun lamps. If you are going to be in the sun, the American Cancer Society recommends the “Slip! Slop! Slap! And Wrap!” method to protect against harmful UV radiation:

- *Slip... on a shirt. Clothing can provide different levels of UV protection, depending on many factors. Long-sleeved shirts, long pants or skirts, tightly woven fabric, and darker colored fabrics provide the most protection. Dry fabric is generally more protective than wet fabric, although some companies now make clothing that is lightweight, comfortable, and protects against UV exposure even when wet.
- *Slop... on a broad-spectrum sunscreen of SPF 30 or higher. Using sunscreens with broad spectrum protection against UVA and UVB rays and with sun protection factor (SPF) values of 30 or higher are recommended. Always follow directions when applying sunscreen. Apply liberally and often, paying close attention to areas often exposed like the face, neck, ears, backs of hands. Don't forget to protect your lips with lip balm that contains sunscreen. Remember, sunscreen doesn't provide total protection from UV rays, but it helps.

- *Slap... on a hat. Hats with at least a two- to three-inch brim all around are ideal because they protect areas often exposed to intense sun, such as the ears, eyes, forehead, nose, and scalp. A dark, non-reflective underside to the brim can also help lower the amount of UV rays reaching the face from reflective surfaces such as water. Shade caps (which look like baseball caps with about seven inches of fabric draping down the sides and back) are also good, and provide more protection for the neck. Baseball caps can provide protection for the front and the top of the head, but not the neck or ears, where skin cancers commonly develop. Straw hats are not as protective as ones made of tightly woven fabric.
- *Wrap... on sunglasses to protect eyes and the sensitive skin around them from UV light. Sunglasses are important for protecting the delicate skin around the eyes, as well as the eyes themselves. Look for wrap-around sunglasses with at least 99 percent UV absorption rate to provide the most protection for this often-overlooked area.



SKIN CARE & CANCER AWARENESS

SPECIAL ADVERTISING SECTION

Q & A

Why should someone come to Phoenix Cyberknife, and at what stage of the process should they come to you for help?

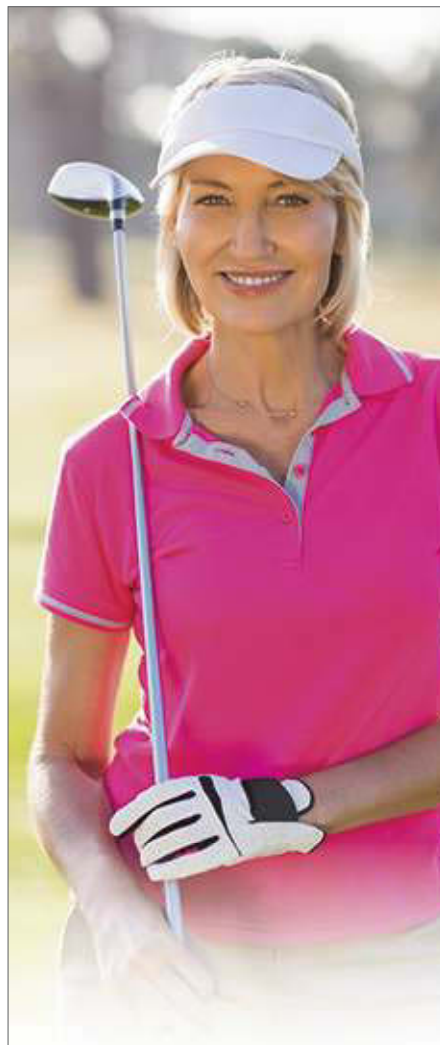
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EARLY DETECTION

Skin cancers can be easily recognized during monthly self-skin exams and routine check-ups. Knowing your own pattern of freckles, moles, blemishes, birthmarks and other marks on the skin is important so you can monitor changes. Non-melanoma cancers can look like a variety of marks on the skin. Key warning signs include new growths, a spot that grows, or a visible sore that doesn't heal within several weeks. When melanoma is localized, survival rates are 98 percent, however that rate falls to 18 percent if it has spread to other parts of the body, so early detection is vital.

TO SPOT A MELANOMA, THE ABCDE RULE IS AN EASY GUIDE:

A FOR ASYMMETRY

If one half of a mole or birthmark is different from the other half.

B FOR BORDER

If the edges of a spot on the skin are irregular, ragged, notched, or blurred.

C FOR COLOR

If the color is not the same throughout and has different shades of brown or tan, or includes black, red, white, pink, and even blue.

D FOR DIAMETER

Most moles are less than $\frac{1}{4}$ an inch across. If a mole is larger than that (about the size of a pencil eraser) or is growing larger.

E FOR EVOLVING

Once a mole has fully developed, it normally stays the same size, shape, and color. Most moles fade as you age. Any changes to the mole should be checked by a health provider.





TREATMENT

The type of skin cancer diagnosed will determine your treatment options and prognosis. Most skin cancers can be treated successfully if its caught early – even melanoma. Non-melanoma skin cancers can be cured by minor surgery, but other treatments like heat, cold, lasers, radiation, and chemotherapy may be used depending on the location and size of the tumor. Melanoma can also be treated successfully with surgery, however advanced tumors may need extensive surgery and treatment such as chemotherapy. While skin cancer is common and everyone is susceptible to it, knowing the types of carcinomas, risk factors, what to look for, and how to protect yourself against UV rays offer the best protection against diagnosis.

If you or someone you know needs help or information about cancer, please call the American Cancer Society toll-free number 24 hours a day, 365 days a year at 1-800-227-2345 or visit our web site at cancer.org.

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SPECIAL ADVERTISING SECTION

Q & A

Why should someone make an appointment with a dermatologist?

Dermatologists are specially trained physicians who are experts in treatment of all diseases of the skin, hair and nails. This training takes at least three to four years beyond medical school and internship.

What can a dermatologist help a patient with?

Dermatologists treat all age groups and commonly treat children who may have eczema, teenagers with acne, and adults with skin cancers and issues related to sun damage. We treat many uncommon skin diseases as well, so any issue of the skin is best-addressed by skin experts who have been trained to recognize unusual conditions. Dermatologists are also experts in skin care and know the best ingredients for optimal health and rejuvenation of the skin.

What is one piece of advice you would give to someone who wants to take better care of their skin?

The single most important piece of advice for optimal health and beauty of your skin is vigilant protection against the sun. Sun protection includes the use of sunscreen, SPF 30 or higher, reapplied to all exposed skin every 90 minutes while outdoors; a wide-brimmed hat; long sleeves that drape over the top of hands to prevent those annoying sun spots; sunglasses; and shade – always seek shade! Also, oral antioxidants can help prevent DNA damage caused by the sun in the form of supplements or sun protective foods like green tea.

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