

## SKIN CANCER

### QUIKRISK™ SELF-ASSESSMENT TEST

	Yes	No
Have you ever been sunburned, even as a child?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have fair skin and light-colored eyes and hair?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have freckles and sunburn easily?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has anyone in your family ever had skin cancer?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you over age 50?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you spend a lot of time outdoors in the sun?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you visit tanning booths?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have a lot of moles on your skin?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you live or vacation in a southern, tropical or high-elevation area that gets more UV radiation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

These are factors that raise skin cancer risk. Answering "yes" to a few questions does not mean you'll get cancer. However, it does mean that you should take steps to protect your skin and discuss your risks with your health care provider.

### Check Your Skin Regularly

Examine your skin monthly. Look for new moles or growths or moles that have changed in appearance. Use a mirror to check hard-to-see areas such as the back, buttocks, scalp, soles of the feet and back of the neck. And be sure to schedule an annual skin check with your health care provider.

### More Skin Protection Tips

**The safest tan is from a can.** Sunless tanners are available in clear and tinted lotions, gels and sprays that can be applied at home or professionally at a salon or spa. They tint the top layers of the skin (you'll usually see results within an hour), and the color wears off in a few days.

**Take extra precautions** or avoid outdoor activities when the sun's rays are strongest, between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

**Cover your eyes.** UV rays can damage the eyes and the delicate skin around them. Choose sunglasses labeled "100 percent UV protection," preferably in a wraparound style that protects more surface area.

**Cover your body.** Wear a long-sleeved shirt, pants and a wide-brimmed hat. Some sun-protective clothing is labeled with an ultraviolet protection factor (UPF) that tells you how much of the sun's UV radiation it absorbs. For example, clothing with a UPF of 50 allows only 1/50, or 2 percent, of the sun's harmful rays to reach your skin.

**Skip the white T-shirt.** A lightweight, light-colored T-shirt provides an SPF of only 7. If the shirt is wet, it provides almost no protection from the sun's rays.

**Seek shade** under an umbrella, tree or canopy.

**Talk with your health care provider or pharmacist** about your medication and sun exposure. Some medications, such as birth control pills, antibiotics, pain relievers and antidepressants, can increase your risk of sunburn and skin cancer.

**Final thought:** The good news about skin cancer is that it can be prevented and, if caught early, cured. Practice skin safety and be smart in the sun. Your skin will look better and will more likely stay cancer-free.



# SKIN CANCER

EARLY DETECTION & PREVENTION

## SKIN CANCER: KNOW THE FACTS

### Basics About Skin Cancer

- It is the most common form of cancer.
- It is also one of the most preventable and treatable types of cancer.
- Skin cancer is caused by long-term exposure to harmful ultraviolet (UV) rays, primarily from the sun.
- There is no such thing as a "healthy" tan. A tan, like a burn, is a sign that your skin cells have already been damaged by UV rays.
- The key to surviving skin cancer is detecting it early and getting treatment right away.



### Top 3 Skin Savers

1. **PROTECT** your skin from the sun's harmful rays.
2. **RECOGNIZE** the early signs of skin cancer.
3. **DETERMINE** your risk for this common disease.

### Top 3 Types of Skin Cancer

1. **Basal cell.** A common, slow-growing type that usually appears on the face, top of the head, neck, hands and forearms. It rarely spreads to other body parts.
2. **Squamous cell.** This type most often appears on parts of the body that are exposed to the sun, such as the face, hands or arms, though it may occur anywhere. It sometimes spreads to lymph nodes and organs.
3. **Melanoma.** This is the least common type, but also the most deadly because it spreads to other organs. Fortunately, melanoma can be cured if it is caught early. The five-year cure rate for melanoma that has not spread beyond the skin is 99 percent.

**Remember:** Even if it is a cold or cloudy day, your skin is still subject to UV radiation from the sun. Take precautions no matter what the weather.

## Protect Yourself with Sunscreen

Sunscreen is one of your best defenses against skin cancer. But it only protects you if you apply it every time you go outdoors and use it correctly.

### GET THE FACTS ABOUT SUNSCREEN

**Choose the right type.** Some sunscreens are more effective than others. Scientists are working to create ingredients that are more protective. Meanwhile, read the labels to make sure your sunscreen blocks both cancer-causing UVA and UVB rays. **The most effective ingredients include** oxybenzone, avobenzone or Parsol® 1789, and Mexoryl™ SX. Sunscreens are available in lotions, gels, sprays and special formulas for sensitive skin, faces and babies.

**Know your number.** As a general rule, use a sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 (30 or higher for the most protection).

**Be sun smart.** Be sure to reapply sunscreen every two hours while in the sun, especially after swimming or sweating. Apply it liberally and follow package directions.



### What Is the UV Index?

The National Weather Service and the Environmental Protection Agency developed the UV Index to help people know when the sun's rays are most harmful. It takes into account local conditions, such as cloud cover, that affect the amount of UV radiation reaching the ground. The scale runs from 0-10, with 0 being the lowest risk of overexposure to harmful UV rays, and 10 being the highest risk. Many local weather reports include UV Index information, or you can search for it on the Web.

### Check the expiration date.

Throw away sunscreen that is beyond its expiration date, and remember that extreme temperatures (if you keep your sunscreen in your car, for example) can reduce the sunscreen's effectiveness over time. Sunscreen with no expiration date should be kept no longer than three years.

## Watch for These Skin Changes

Skin cancer can almost always be cured if it is caught early. Learn to recognize the skin changes that could be early symptoms. If you find one, tell your health care provider.

**Most skin cancers can be removed if they are caught early and have not spread beyond the skin.**

### SIGNS OF NONMELANOMA CANCERS

- **A sore that bleeds** or hasn't healed within three weeks
- **A spot that is new** or growing
- **A spot that changes** in appearance or texture
- **A spot that is scaly, crusted** or oozing
- **A mark that itches, hurts** or feels different
- **A growth with local swelling, redness** or irritation
- **A spot that grows, changes shape** or color, hurts, bleeds or hasn't healed within a couple weeks

### SIGNS OF MELANOMA

#### Remember "ABCD"...

- A symmetry:** The sides of a mole don't match.
- B order:** The edges are often ragged, notched, blurred or irregular; the color may spread into surrounding skin.
- C color:** The color is uneven. Shades of black, brown, and tan may be present. Areas of white, grey, red, pink or blue also may be seen.
- D diameter:** The size of a melanoma is usually larger than the eraser of a pencil (1/4 inch or 5 millimeters). Moles with melanoma often get larger.