

HEALTH HUB
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Prevent Melanoma Skin Cancer All- Year Round



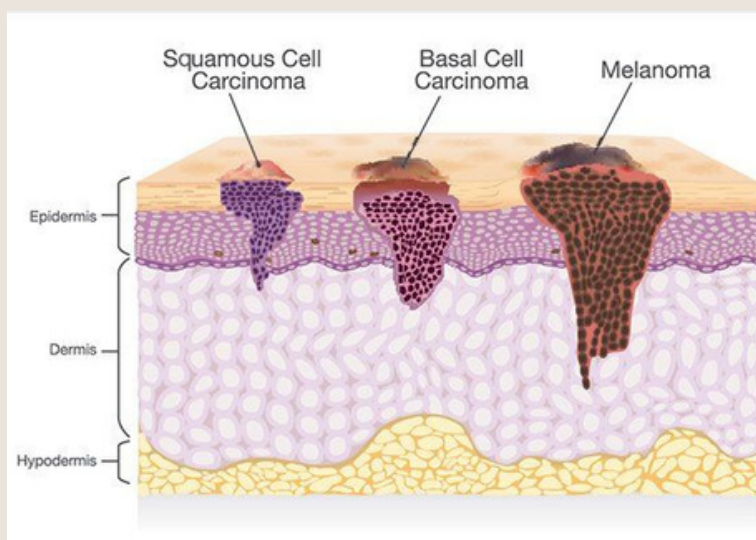


Prevent Melanoma Skin Cancer All Year-Round

PREVENTION , SELF-AWARENESS, AND EARLY DIAGNOSIS ARE CRITICAL IN PREVENTING MELANOMA SKIN CANCER

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The skin is the largest organ of the body and includes three layers: the epidermis, dermis, and hypodermis. The three main types of skin cancer originate from cells in the epidermis layer. See the image from [Everyday Health \(2022\)](#). There are three main types of skin cancers: basal cell carcinoma, squamous cell carcinoma, and melanoma. Basal cell carcinoma and squamous cell carcinoma are also referred to as non-melanoma skin cancers and are typically not as serious as melanoma skin cancer. Non-melanoma skin cancers can be more easily treated by a medical provider. Melanoma tends to spread to



other parts of the body and is more serious than non-melanoma skin cancers and may take more elaborate treatments to resolve ([Nahar, 2013](#)).

Melanoma is developed from skin cells that produce melanin or the color of the skin. This melanin producing skin cell can be affected by ultraviolet radiation (UVR), or the rays that come from the sun or tanning beds, which can darken or tan the skin. When these skin cells begin dividing and spreading to other areas of the body without control, it results in melanoma skin cancer ([Nahar, 2013](#)).

Utah Stats

Utah has the Highest Rate of Melanoma Skin Cancer in the Nation

In the nation, cancer causes one in every six deaths and is the leading cause of death (CDC, 2024a). Melanoma skin cancer is one of the most common forms of cancer. Melanoma skin cancer is a specific cancer of concern for Utahns as Utah has the highest rate of skin cancer in the nation. Melanoma is the third most diagnosed cancer in Utah, only after prostate and breast cancer (Bowles et al., 2021). Utah's melanoma skin cancer rate is almost double the rest of the nation and has

always been at a concerning high rate (CDC, 2024b). Melanoma cancer in Utah occurs 80% more than the rest of the nation and the death rate is 31% higher than the nation. In Utah, males are diagnosed with melanoma skin cancer more frequently compared to females (Bowles et al., 2021).

While melanoma skin cancer can occur through genetic factors, there is also a connection through environmental risk factors, which

increase someone's chance of developing skin cancer. Environmental risk factors could arise from a combination of UVR from a natural source, like sunlight, or other artificial UVR sources, such as tanning beds. In Utah, natural characteristics of the State and population that could lead to more intense UVR levels include a high sun exposure, high elevation, outdoor activities all year, and mostly fair skin types within the population (Bowles et al., 2021).

FAST FACTS

Year-Round UV Rays

The sun's rays are just as powerful in the winter as they are in the summer.

Double Trouble

UV light can bounce back 80% of the rays that reflect from snow or ice hitting the skin twice.

Sunscreen Everyday

One of the best ways to prevent UV rays from damaging your skin is to wear sunscreen everyday.

Vitamin D

Allow 5-10 minutes of sun exposure 2-3 times per week or, even better, enjoy eating some fish that is full of Vitamin D.

Elevation Situation

Higher elevations have more intense UV rays.

Prevent Your Skin from Burning

The risk for melanoma doubles with more than five sunburns.



Prevention

Prevention Significantly Reduces Risks for Melanoma Skin Cancer



Prevention, self-awareness, and early diagnosis are critical in preventing melanoma skin cancer. Stay in the shade, wear clothing that covers the arms and legs, wear a hat and sunglasses, use a broad-spectrum sunscreen with SPF 15 or higher. Always avoid artificial UVR exposure, such as tanning beds. A tan after sun exposure doesn't indicate health, it indicates an injury to the skin (CDC, 2024c). Visit a dermatologist every year for a skin cancer exam and upload the verification into WellSteps for 50 points. When detected early, melanoma has a high survival rate of 94% (National Cancer Institute, n.d.). Melanoma can be prevented through awareness and decreasing environmental and genetic risk factors that exacerbate the risk of developing melanoma (CDC 2024c).

In addition to your annual dermatologist skin check appointment, staying in the shade, and using sunscreen, hats, sunglasses, and clothing, it can be helpful for you to track and check your moles. The following image by [Family Caregivers Online \(2023\)](#) provides the ABCDEs of melanoma. This image can help you identify if a mole is cancerous. When a mole exhibits any one of the following ABCDE features, it is time to see a doctor. A cancerous mole could appear to be asymmetrical, have an irregular border, be unevenly colored, larger than 6 millimeters across, or changing in size, shape, or color.

MOLE FEATURES		BENIGN	SEE DOCTOR
A	ASYMMETRY ONE HALF OF A MOLE DOES NOT MATCH THE OTHER.		
B	BORDER THE EDGES ARE IRREGULAR, RAGGED, NOTCHED, OR BLURRED. NORMAL MOLES ARE ROUND OR OVAL.		
C	COLOR THE MOLE IS NOT EVENLY COLORED. IT MAY INCLUDE SHADES OF BROWN OR BLACK, OR PATCHES OF PINK, RED, WHITE OR BLUE.		
D	DIAMETER THE SPOT IS LARGER THAN 6 MILLIMETERS ACROSS		
E	EVOLVING THE MOLE IS CHANGING IN SIZE, SHAPE, OR COLOR.		