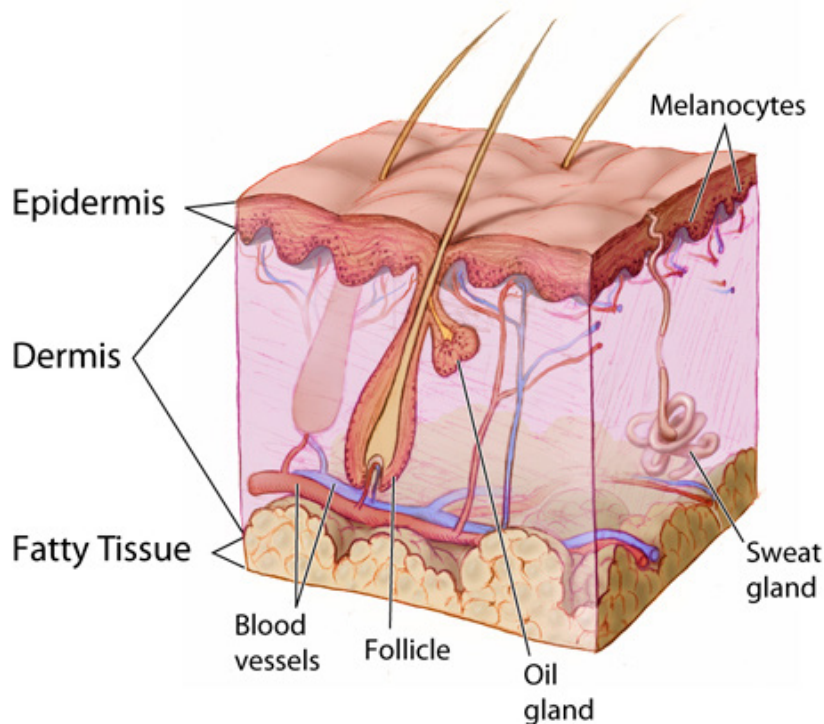


Skin Cancer

Information Sheet



What is skin cancer?

Skin cancer is cancer that starts in your skin. The skin is the body's largest organ.

There are several types of skin cancer including basal cell, squamous cell and melanoma. Skin cancers vary in severity from the relatively minor basal cell to the potentially deadly melanoma.

Ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun is the main cause of skin cancer. **UV radiation** is given off by the sun and from bulbs during indoor tanning.

Melanoma is the most dangerous form of skin cancer. In Wisconsin, the number of individuals being diagnosed with melanoma is increasing. You need to protect your skin all year and not just during the summer months.

How can I prevent skin cancer?

You can lower your chance of developing skin cancer by making healthy choices.

- Wear sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or more
- Apply sunscreen 15-30 minutes before going outside
- Reapply sunscreen every 2 hours (more often when working, playing or swimming)
- Limit midday sun exposure (10:00am to 4:00pm)
- Wear long sleeves, long pants, tightly woven fabrics, and a broad brimmed hat
- Wear sunglasses that have UV protection
- Avoid sunlamps and tanning booths



There are two types of UV radiation, UVA and UVB. UVA and UVB are harmful and you should make sure that your eyewear and sunscreen block out both. The most harmful effects of sun exposure occur during early childhood. Limiting your child's exposure to UV radiation is the most important way to prevent skin cancer.

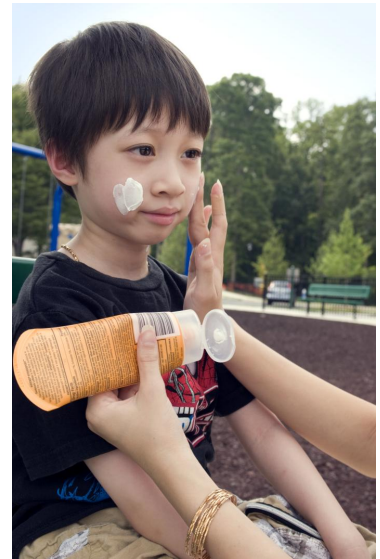
Skin Cancer

What are possible symptoms of skin cancer?

A change in the skin is a common sign of skin cancer. This may be a new growth, an old growth or a sore that doesn't heal.

Examine your moles monthly by using the ABCD method:

- **A**symmetry: one half of the moles does not match the other half
- **B**order irregularity: the edges are ragged, notched or blurred
- **C**olor: different colors of tan, brown or black in mole
- **D**iameter: the mole is bigger than a pencil eraser head or is getting bigger



Talk to your health care provider if you have a mole or growth that you are unsure about. The mole or growth may not be cancerous. However, early detection and treatment of skin cancer increases the chances of curing the cancer.

Where can I get more information?

The National Cancer Institute provides accurate and up-to-date information about skin cancer, other cancer types, prevention, detection, diagnosis, treatment, survivorship and end of life care.

Phone: 1-800-4CANCER (1-800-422-6237)

Website: www.cancer.gov

The Rural Cancer Network (RCaN) offers other user-friendly, cancer educational handouts. For more information about skin cancer, please see the "Skin Cancer: Information Sheet" handout.

Website: www.ruralcancernetwork.org



Carbone Cancer Center
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AND PUBLIC HEALTH



ruralcancernetwork.org



**Cancer Health
Disparities Initiative**

For more local information, please contact:

Place label here

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Information adapted from the National Cancer Institute.
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