



# TIP SHEET Skin Cancer

FOR TEENS

## What You Need to Know

Ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun (or sunlamp) tans, burns and damages your skin. Damaged skin cells lead to skin cancer, the most common of all cancers. Skin cancers affect more than 2 million people each year and include:

- **Basal cell carcinoma**
- **Squamous cell carcinoma**
- **Melanoma**

Melanoma can be deadly. If not caught early, it often spreads to other body areas, making treatment challenging and disfiguring.

## Myths About Skin Cancer

**Myth** A little tan is healthy

**Fact** Any tan is evidence of skin damage from UV radiation. Damaged skin is more likely to develop skin cancer.

**Myth** Indoor tanning is safer than sun tanning

**Fact** Tanning beds can cause more damage because they use UVA light, which penetrates deeper. Newer, high-pressure sunlamps yield 12 times the UVA dose as sunlight.

**Myth** Sun exposure clears up acne

**Fact** Tanning can aggravate acne. Plus, acne treatments and antibiotics make skin more sensitive to UV rays and more susceptible to burning and damage.

## RISK FACTORS FOR SKIN CANCER

- **UV exposure** from either sunlight or sun lamp. Your exposure accumulates over your lifetime.
- **A bad sunburn.** One or more blistering sunburns as a child or teen more than doubles your risk for melanoma later in life.
- **Fair skin that burns easily.** People with fair skin, red or blonde hair, blue or gray eyes, or many freckles are more likely to develop skin cancer.

Using a tanning bed before age 35 increases melanoma risk by **75%**

The number of skin cancers from tanning is higher than the number of lung cancers due to smoking.



## PRACTICE SUN SAFETY

- ✓ **Ban the tan!** If you must “glow,” opt for shimmery cosmetics or lotion bronzers.
- ✓ **Apply sunscreen daily** at least 30 minutes before sun exposure and on cloudy days, too.
- ✓ **Seek shade** during the sun’s most intense hours between 10 am and 4 pm.
- ✓ **Use a broad spectrum (UVA/UVB) sunscreen** with SPF of at least 30. Choose a water-resistant formula and reapply every two hours, and more frequently after swimming or sweating.
- ✓ **Cover up** with protective clothing including a broad-brimmed hat.
- ✓ **Shade your eyes** with sunglasses that filter UV rays.



## HAVE A DOCTOR CHECK ANY...

- ✓ **New or changed mole or skin growth**
- ✓ **Darkened, rough or scaly skin patch**
- ✓ **Sore that won't heal**

## Meet the Doctors

(above from left to right)

### Dermatology

- 1) Kimberly Brady, MD
- 2) Bethany Lema, MD
- 3) Gyorgy Paragh, MD, PhD
- 4) Ilene L. Rothman, MD

### Dermatopathology

- 5) Paul Bogner, MD
- 6) Richard Cheney, MD

### Surgical Oncology

- 7) Valerie Francescutti, MD, FRCSC
- 8) John Kane III, MD, FACS
- 9) Joseph Skitzki, MD

### Head and Neck Surgery

- 10) David Cohan, MD
- 11) Vishal Gupta, MD
- 12) Wesley Hicks, Jr., MD, FACS

### Medical Oncology

- 13) Amy Early, MD

### Radiation Oncology

- 14) Kilian Salerno, MD

### Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery

- 15) Hassan Arshad, MD
- 16) Cemile Nurdan Ozturk, MD
- 17) Paul Tomljanovich, MD



**67%**  
Increased risk  
for squamous cell  
carcinoma after ONE  
indoor tanning  
session.



## Learn More

[www.yroswell.com](http://www.yroswell.com)

A website designed specifically for young people who want to get involved and help create a world without cancer.

[www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org)

Honest, accurate information about health, emotions and life.

[www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/aya](http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/aya)

Information and resources for adolescents and young adults with cancer.