



Maryland Skin Cancer Prevention Program

www.sunguardman.org

2011 Fact Sheet

- Skin cancer is the most common type of cancer, with over 2 million new cases of the highly curable basal cell or squamous cell skin cancers expected in the United States this year.
- The most serious form of skin cancer is melanoma, which is expected to be diagnosed in about 69,000 people in the U.S. and in about 1,300 people in Maryland in 2011. The highest melanoma rates are on the Eastern and Western Shores of the Chesapeake Bay and the Central Maryland counties.
- Melanoma, while accounting for only about 5% of all skin cancers, is responsible for over 75% of skin cancer deaths. It is the most rapidly increasing form of cancer, more than doubling in the last 30 years.
- You don't have to be very old to get skin cancer. About one in four people who develop melanoma are under the age of 40.
- Although lighter skinned people are at a higher risk for developing melanoma, persons of all races and ethnic backgrounds are susceptible. In darker skinned people, melanoma may develop on the palms of the hands, the soles of the feet, or under the nails. It is often diagnosed at later stages resulting in a higher mortality rate.
- On the positive side, malignant melanoma is the most preventable type of cancer. The major risk factor is childhood sunburn. Just one or two blistering sunburns double a person's chance of developing melanoma later in life.
- Studies show that nearly 75% of teenagers experience at least one sunburn during the summer. Only about one third use sunscreen.
- Tanning beds emit dangerous UV radiation and are linked to skin cancer. Ultraviolet radiation from artificial tanning devices, was elevated in 2009 to a "Class 1 Carcinogen," the most dangerous level, by the World Health Organization.
- People who first use a tanning bed before age 35 increase their risk of melanoma by 75%.
- Since October 1, 2008 minors need in-person parental consent to use a tanning facility in Maryland.
- The Program's *SunGuard Your Skin* program is a two-lesson curriculum, available to teachers free of charge, on SunGuard Man Online at www.sunguardman.org. This web site also offers information, a cartoon adventure series, videogames, activities, and contests for students.
- The Maryland Skin Cancer Prevention Program works to increase skin cancer awareness and provide skin cancer prevention education to the citizens of Maryland, especially children and adolescents. Its mission is to promote behavior that is likely to prevent skin cancer, and ultimately to make such behavior so familiar to the citizens of Maryland that it is established as a social norm.