

Fundamentals of Skin Cancer

Skin cancer is classified as a malignant neoplasm of the skin. As the most prevalent cancer, the risk of skin cancer affects a large cross section of the population, most notably those that have fair skin and freckles. Consequently, it is also relatively avoidable when you take the proper precautions. Simply put, skin cancer is often due to an over-exposure of the body to ultra-violet rays. It doesn't matter where these rays come from, because both the sun and commercial tanning beds give you an increased risk of developing skin cancer.

To most easily decrease your chance of getting this disease, it's important to take the proper precautions when exposing yourself to the sun. When possible, wear clothing that is tightly woven to shield yourself from the sun's rays. A loose fit on your clothes is another way to make certain that as few rays as possible reach your skin. Dark colored clothing is also thought to help ward off ultra-violet rays, so all of these precautions should be taken when you are planning to be in the sun for an extended period of time.

Also, it is vital to wear sunscreen when exposing your body to the sun's rays. An SPF value of at least 15 is recommended for those who wish to tan themselves without drastically increasing their risk of developing skin cancer. In addition, do your best to avoid exposing yourself to the sun's rays between 10 AM and 3 PM. These are the hours of the day in which the sun produces the harshest UV rays, and avoiding sun during these hours is recommended to decrease your likelihood of skin cancer. Your lips should be protected with an SPF lip balm as well, since the risk of lip cancer is increased by too much sun exposure.

Sunglasses can also be a smart idea; they help you to avoid getting too much exposure to the sun on your eyelids, which are susceptible layers of skin which can develop skin cancer just the same as the rest of your body.

There are three types of skin cancer: the two that are least harmful are basal cell carcinoma and Squamous cell carcinoma. When these cancers are discovered, it is usually possible to treat them without much of a risk, with a full 90 percent of all carcinomas diagnoses being treated successfully. However, there is another, more deadly kind of skin cancer, which is known as malignant melanoma. This form of skin cancer can spread to other parts of the body, including the lungs and the liver, and could be very difficult to treat. While this cancer can be treated with a high success rate when caught early, advanced cases of melanoma can be exceedingly difficult to treat. Melanoma accounts for a full 75 percent of all skin cancer cases that result in death. If melanoma is diagnosed while in an early stage, treatment can be quite simple and the risk of death is low. However, the longer you delay treatment, the more exponential the risk of death grows.