



melanoma

**Brochures
and additional
information**

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melanoma

What is the single
most powerful
weapon in the fight
against skin cancer?

Information.



melanoma

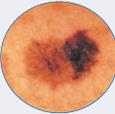


How can we protect ourselves?

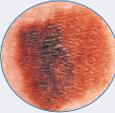
MELANOMA is a serious form of skin cancer of melanocytes, the cells that produce dark protective pigment called melanin. Individual lesions may appear as a dark brown, black or multicolored growth with irregular borders that can become crusted and bleed.

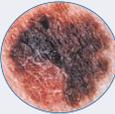
Melanoma may affect anyone at any age and can occur anywhere on the body. An increased risk of developing the disease is seen in people who have fair skin, light hair and eye color, a family history of melanoma or who have had melanoma in the past. These tumors can arise in or near a pre-existing mole or may appear without warning. Melanoma may spread to other organs, making it essential to treat this skin cancer early.

The ABCD's of Melanoma:

A  **Asymmetry**
One half does not match the other half

B  **Border Irregularity**
The edges are notched or ragged

C  **Color**
Varied shades of tan, black and brown

D  **Diameter**
Greater than six millimeters
6 mm actual size – 

Images provided by Medscape®



What are the treatment options?

Overexposure to sunlight, especially when it results in sunburn and blistering, is a major cause of melanoma. Thus an effective preventative measure to help reduce the risk of melanoma is sun avoidance, especially during peak sunlight hours (i.e., 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.). Limit skin exposure to the sun's harmful ultraviolet (invisible) rays by wearing sunglasses, broad-brimmed hats and protective, tightly woven clothing.

Furthermore, use a broad-spectrum sunscreen, rated SPF-15 or higher, on all exposed skin, including the lips, even on cloudy days. Reapply sunscreen frequently. Additionally, avoid tanning parlors and artificial tanning devices.

Inspect your entire body for any skin changes and routinely visit your dermatologist for a skin examination. Detecting melanoma early can be lifesaving, since this cancer may be curable in its early stages. Any irregularity in an existing or newly developed pigmented skin lesion (e.g., asymmetry, uneven border, color variability, diameter of more than 6mm, elevation or bleeding) could be a sign of melanoma and should be examined immediately by a dermatologist.

People with dark brown or black skin can also develop melanoma, especially on the palms of the hands, soles of the feet, under nails and in the mouth. Therefore, these areas of the body should be examined closely in dark-skinned individuals.

After sections of tissue from a biopsy of your skin are assessed under a microscope by a dermatopathologist and determined to be melanoma, he or she will recommend treatment options. The selection of treatment of melanoma is dependent upon several variables, including the tumor's location, extent of spread and aggressiveness, as well as the patient's general health. Forms of treatment for melanoma include surgical excision, Mohs surgery (microscopically controlled surgery), chemotherapy and radiation therapy. Your dermatologist will consult with you to determine the most appropriate therapy.

Don't become a statistic.

One in five-to-six Americans will develop skin cancer at some point in life. At least 90% of these cancers result from exposure to the sun's ultraviolet radiation.

Although melanoma accounts for only 5% of all skin cancer, it is responsible for more than 80% of the deaths from skin cancer.

Melanoma develops on the skin of approximately 53,600 Americans annually, with an estimated 7,800 dying from melanoma every year.