



# DayInDayOut

WELCOA'S ONLINE BULLETIN FOR YOUR LIFESTYLE



*Anyone Can Get*

# SKIN CANCER

Is it true that only people with light skin get skin cancer?

No. Anyone can get skin cancer. It's more common among people with a light (fair) skin tone, but skin cancer can affect anyone. Skin cancer can affect both men and women.

**How can people with dark skin get skin cancer?**

Although dark skin does not burn in the sun as easily as fair skin, everyone is at risk for skin cancer. Even people who don't burn are at risk for skin cancer. It doesn't matter whether you consider your skin light, dark, or somewhere in between. You are at risk for skin cancer. Being in the sun can damage your skin. Sunlight causes damage through ultraviolet, or UV rays, (they make up just one part of sunlight). Two parts of UV, UVA and UVB, can both cause damage to skin. Also, the sun isn't the only cause of skin cancer. There are other causes. That's why skin cancer may be found in places on the body never exposed to the sun.

**How can I find skin cancer early?**

- Talk with your doctor if you see any changes on your skin that do not go away within one month.
- Check thwe skin on all surfaces of your body, even in your mouth.
- Watch for a new mole or other new growth on your skin.
- Check for changes in the appearance of an old growth on the skin or scar (especially a burn scar).
- Watch for a patch of skin that is a different color and becomes darker or changes color.
- Watch for a sore that does not heal—it may bleed or form a crust.
- Check your nails for a dark band. Check with your doctor if you see changes, such as if the dark band begins to spread.

*When skin cancer is found early, it can be treated more easily.*

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## How can I protect myself from skin cancer?

**Have your doctor check your skin** if you are concerned about a change.

Your doctor may take a sample of your skin to check for cancer cells.

**Ask your doctor** about your risk of skin cancer:

- › Some skin conditions and certain medicines (such as some antibiotics or hormones) may make your skin more sensitive to damage from the sun.
- › Medicines or medical conditions (such as HIV) that suppress the immune system may make you more likely to develop skin cancer.
- › Having scars or skin ulcers increases your risk.
- › Exposure to a high level of arsenic (a poison that is sometimes found in well water or pesticides) increases your risk.

**Stay out of the sun** as much as you can. Whenever possible, avoid exposure to the sun from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. If you work or play outside, then...

- › Try to wear long sleeves, long pants, and a hat that shades your face, ears, and neck with a brim all around.
- › Use sunscreen with a label that says it is broad spectrum or is at least SPF 15 and can filter both UVA and UVB rays.
- › Wear sunglasses that filter UV to protect your eyes and the skin around your eyes.
- › If you are concerned about having a low level of vitamin D from not being in the sun, talk with your doctor about supplements.

**Don't use tanning beds**, tanning booths, or sunlamps.

