

Don't forget sunscreen this summer! According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the United States. It accounts for about half of all cancers in the country. More than 3.5 million cases of basal and squamous cell skin cancer are diagnosed in the U.S. each year. Melanoma is the most serious type of skin cancer and it will account for more than 76,600 cases of skin cancer in 2013. Sometimes skin cancer can be caused by genetic factors that cannot be helped. However, many times skin cancer is preventable.

How can you help prevent skin cancer?

- Wear sunscreen even on cloudy days! SPF 15 or greater with UVA and UVB (or broad spectrum) protection is recommended.
- Cover up with protective clothing to guard as much skin as possible from harmful rays.
- Wear a hat that shades your face.
- Sunglasses with UVA and UVB protection are also a good choice.
- Limit sun exposure from 10am to 4pm when rays are strongest.
- Seek shade when enjoying the outdoors.
- **Avoid tanning beds.**

It is important to know how to recognize possible cancer of the skin. Looking for mysterious moles or lesions is something that you can do regularly at home. One easy way to remember what to look for is to know your ABCD's of melanoma.

- A- Look for ASYMMETRY.
- B- Check for an irregular BORDER.
- C- Is the COLOR uneven? Or are there shades of tan, brown, or black?
- D- The DIAMETER should be less than 6 millimeters.

If skin cancer runs in your family or if you have concerns about skin cancer, you should visit a dermatologist regularly to thoroughly assess your skin.