

EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION CONCERNING SKIN CANCERS

There are three main types of skin cancer: basal cell carcinoma, squamous cell carcinoma, and melanoma. Because each has many different appearances, it is important to know the early warning signs. Look especially for change of any kind. Do not ignore a suspicious spot simply because it does not hurt. Skin cancers may be painless, but dangerous all the same.

If you notice one or more of the warning signs, see a doctor right away, preferably one who specializes in diseases of the skin.

- A skin growth that increases in size and appears pearly, translucent, tan, brown, black, or multicolored
- A mole, birthmark, beauty mark, or any brown spot that:
 - changes color
 - increases in size
 - changes in texture
 - is irregular in outline
- A spot or sore that continues to itch, hurt, crust, scab, erode, or bleed
- An open sore that does not heal within three weeks

Skin cancers are associated with exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun and tanning beds.

- **Seek the shade**, especially between 10 AM and 4 PM.
- **Do not burn.**
- **Avoid tanning and UV tanning booths.**
- **Cover up** with clothing, including a broad-brimmed hat and UV-blocking sunglasses.
- **Use a broad spectrum (UVA/UVB) sunscreen** with an SPF of 30 or higher every day.
- **Apply 1 ounce** (2 tablespoons) of sunscreen to your entire body 30 minutes before going outside.
- **Reapply** every two hours or immediately after swimming or excessive sweating.
- **Keep newborns out of the sun.** Sunscreens should be used on babies over the age of six months.
- **Examine your skin** head-to-toe every month.
- **Learn your family history. If your parents, siblings or children have had melanoma your risk is increased and you should be examined yearly.**