

# Lifestyle Lessons

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## Stay Safe in the Sun

Skin cancer is both dangerous and common – it is the most common form of cancer in the United States and over two million people are diagnosed annually. Even more startling, sun exposure is the primary cause of over 90 percent of non-melanoma skin cancer cases reported in the United States. Though basking in the sun is relaxing and fun, it is also dangerous for your health. To protect the skin you are in, consider the following facts.

### Types of Sun Damage

- Suntan
- Wrinkles
- Age Spots
- Freckles
- Tough, leathery skin
- Dilated blood vessels
- Sunburn
- Skin Cancer



## Healthy Hints

Avoiding excessive sun exposure is ultimately the best way to protect your body from skin cancer.

If you must go in the sun, routinely inspect your body for any changes such as a new freckle or enlarged mole. If you suspect that a spot on your skin is new or has changed in appearance, consult a dermatologist immediately.

### Risks and Prevention

Although almost everyone is somewhat susceptible to skin cancer because most people travel outside of their homes on a daily basis, some people possess characteristics that place them at a higher risk for developing the disease. These risks include:

- Having a large number of moles on the body.
- Red or blonde hair, blue eyes, fair skin and freckles.
- Difficulty tanning and skin that burns easily.
- Family history of skin cancer.
- Taking medication that increases sun sensitivity.

#### Prevention Techniques:

- Avoid getting a sunburn while outside.
- Stay out of the sun between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. when the sun is at its peak in the sky.
- Wear clothes made of tightly woven fabrics and a hat that shields your face, neck and ears.
- Wear sunglasses to protect your retinas and prevent the development of cataracts.
- Use sunscreen that is at least SPF 15, applying it all over your body and lips.
- Do not use tanning beds; they are just as damaging as natural sunlight.

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