



Summer officially starts this Saturday, June 21! That means pool parties, cookouts and lots of time outdoors. While outside, remember to protect yourself from the sun! 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 deadly and is also the third most common form of skin cancer. Sometimes skin cancer can be caused by genetic factors that cannot be helped. However, many times skin cancer is preventable by practicing good sun safety.

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.**

Even a few sunburns can increase your risk and your child's risk of developing skin cancer. Any change in skin color from the sun, whether a tan or a burn, indicates skin damage. Despite current trends, tanned skin is damaged skin. Unprotected skin can be damaged from the sun's rays in as little as 15 minutes and oftentimes, burns don't show up immediately. Even if skin looks normal or just a little pink now, doesn't mean there is no sunburn. It may take several hours for sunburn to show up on a person's skin.