

8 risk factors for skin cancer

Skin cancer is the most common cancer in the United States.

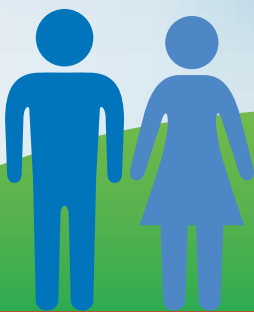
- Red or blond hair, fair skin, freckles and blue or light-colored eyes
- More than 50 moles
- History of frequent or intense sun exposure
- History of tanning bed use
- One or more blistering sunburns
- Family history of melanoma
- Personal history of melanoma
- Personal history of basal cell and/or squamous cell skin cancers

▶ **If you have one or more of these risk factors, consult your doctor or schedule a skin cancer screening exam.**

Most skin cancers fall into one of these three categories:

- **Basal cell** is a slow-growing cancer that seldom spreads.
- **Squamous cell** is more likely than basal cell to spread, but it is much less common.
- **Melanoma** makes up only two percent of skin cancers, but causes the most skin cancer deaths.

Always be on the lookout for moles, spots or bumps that change or grow.



Having dark skin does not protect you from skin cancer.

The disease is increasing among African-Americans and Hispanics.

Lower your skin cancer risk

Stay in the shade

Look for shady areas when outside. Avoid going outdoors between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Use sunscreen and lip balm

Apply liberally, 30 minutes before going outside. Reapply every two hours.

Choose products with SPF 30 or higher.

Cover up

Wear dark, tightly woven clothing.

Pick a hat with a large brim to protect your ears and neck.

Use extra caution

Water, snow and sand amplify the sun's rays.

Skip the tanning bed

Tanning beds are not a safe alternative to the sun.

Wear sunglasses

Look for lenses that provide both UVA and UVB protection.