



An ounce of prevention...

Texas J-RAC Prevention and Education Committee Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 7 July 2013

The Texas "J" Regional Advisory Council shall encourage and support the development of a comprehensive continuum of quality health care to be provided for all patients in Trauma Service Area "J". The Prevention & Education Committee shall encourage and support J-RAC participants endeavors to fully develop and implement the region wide trauma system in order to reduce the number of trauma incidents, preventable deaths, and reduce the severity of trauma-related disability, and to ensure that all trauma victims receive the best care possible.

Skin Cancer Prevention Resources

Skin cancer is the most common of all cancers. More than 1 million cases of non melanoma skin cancer are found in the United States each year. In Texas, the odds of getting skin cancer are increased. One in three Texans will develop some form of skin cancer. Texas ranks third in the nation for malignant melanoma, the deadliest of all skin cancers. It is estimated, in Texas, that there will be 3,896 new cases and 547 deaths from skin cancer. Listed below are links to skin cancer prevention and awareness education information could greatly reduce the number of those affected

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Physician Education

- [Skin Cancer \(PDQ®\): Prevention](#)
- [Skin Cancer \(PDQ®\): Screening](#)
- [Intraocular Melanoma \(PDQ®\): Treatment](#)
- [Melanoma \(PDQ®\): Treatment](#)
- [Merkel Cell Carcinoma \(PDQ®\): Treatment](#)
- [Skin Cancer: Actinic Keratoses, Basal Cell Carcinoma, Melanoma, and Squamous Cell Carcinoma](#)
- [Sun Damage and Prevention, Sunscreens, and Guidelines for minimizing UV Exposure](#)

Policies and Reports

- [Action Plan on Skin Cancer for the State of Texas](#) -
- [Guidelines for School Programs To Prevent Skin Cancer](#)
- [Increasing Use of Skin Cancer Prevention Behaviors \(Healthy People 2010\)](#) -
- [Public Health Action Steps for Reducing Skin Cancer](#)

Tools

- [The Skin Cancer Foundation](#)

Patient Resources

- [CancerCare](#)
- [Melanoma Home Page](#)
- [Skin Cancer Home Page](#)
- [Sunscreen: How to Select, Apply, and Use it Correctly](#)
- [Sunwise School Program](#)
- [Healthy Youth! Skin Cancer](#)

Links

- [American Academy of Dermatology](#)
- [American Cancer Society](#)
- [Texas Cancer Information](#)
- [The National Council on Skin Cancer Prevention](#)
- [The National Skin Cancer Prevention Education Program](#)

Source: <http://www.texmed.org/template.aspx?id=2443>



Knowing the ABCDE's can aid in identifying suspected melanoma / skin cancer.



'A' is for Asymmetry

Asymmetry means one half of a mole does not match the other half. Normal moles are symmetrical. When checking your moles or freckles, draw an imaginary line through the middle and compare the two halves. If they do not look the same on both sides, have it checked by a dermatologist



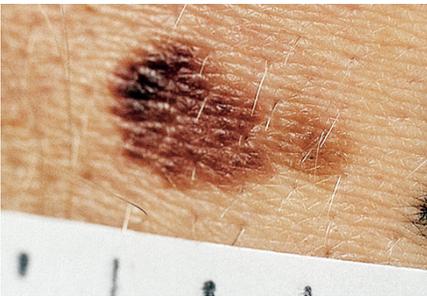
'B' is for Border

If the border or edges of the mole are ragged, blurred, or irregular, have it checked by a dermatologist. Melanoma lesions often have uneven borders.



'C' is for Color

A mole that does not have the same color throughout or that has shades of tan, brown, black, blue, white, or red is suspicious. Normal moles are usually a single shade of color. A mole of many shades or that has lightened or darkened should be checked by a doctor.



'D' is for Diameter

A mole is suspicious if the diameter is larger than the eraser of a pencil.



'E' is for Evolving

A mole that is evolving – shrinking, growing larger, changing color, begins to itch or bleed – should be checked. If a portion of the mole appears newly elevated, or raised from the skin, have it looked at by a doctor. Melanoma lesions often grow in size or change in height rapidly.

Skin Cancer Prevention

Protecting your skin

Most skin cancer can be prevented. Use the following tips to protect your skin from the sun. You may decrease your chances of developing skin cancer and help prevent wrinkles.

Avoid sun exposure

The best way to prevent a sunburn is to avoid sun exposure.

Stay out of the midday sun (from 10 in the morning to 4 in the afternoon), which is the strongest sunlight. Find shade if you need to be outdoors. You can also calculate how much [ultraviolet \(UV\)](#) exposure you are getting by using the *shadow rule*: A shadow that is longer than you are means UV exposure is low; a shadow that is shorter than you are means the UV exposure is high.

Other ways to protect yourself from the sun include wearing protective clothing, such as:

- Hats with wide 4 in. (10 cm) brims that cover your neck, [ears](#), [eyes](#), and scalp.
- Sunglasses with UV ray protection, to prevent eye damage that may lead to [cataracts](#).
- Loose-fitting, tightly woven clothing that covers your arms and legs.
- Clothing made with sun protective fabric. These clothes have a special label that tells you how effective they are in protecting your [skin](#) from ultraviolet rays.

Preventing sun exposure in children

You should start protecting your child from the sun when he or she is a baby. Because children spend a lot of time outdoors playing, they get most of their lifetime sun exposure in their first 18 years.

It's safest to keep babies younger than 6 months out of the sun. If you can't keep your baby out of the sun, cover your child's skin with hats and clothing. Protect any bare skin with a small amount of [sunscreen](#) that is SPF 15 or higher.

Teach children the ABCs of how to protect their skin from getting sunburned.

- **A = Away.** Stay away from the sun in the middle of the day (from 10 in the morning to 4 in the afternoon).
- **B = Block.** Use a sunscreen with a [sun protection factor \(SPF\)](#) of 15 or higher to protect babies' and children's very sensitive skin.
- **C = Cover up.** Wear clothing that covers the skin, hats with wide brims, and sunglasses with UV protection. Even children 1 year old should wear sunglasses with UV protection.
- **S = Speak out.** Teach others to protect their skin from sun damage.



The benefits of sunscreen have been proven by science

Wear Sunscreen

Sunscreen protection

If you can't avoid being in the sun, use a sunscreen to help protect your skin while you are in the sun. Be sure to read the information on the sunscreen label about the SPF factor listed on the label and how much protection it gives your skin. Follow the directions on the label for applying the sunscreen so it is most effective in protecting your skin from the sun's ultraviolet rays.

Choosing a sunscreen

Sunscreens come in lotions, gels, creams, ointments, and sprays. Use a sunscreen that:

- Has a [sun protection factor \(SPF\)](#) of at least 15 or higher.
- Says "broad-spectrum" that protects the skin from ultraviolet A and B ([UVA and UVB](#)) rays.

Use lip balm or cream that has SPF of 15 or higher to protect your lips from getting sunburned or developing [cold sores](#). Use a higher SPF at when you are near water, at higher elevations or in tropical climates. Sunscreen effectiveness is affected by the wind, humidity, and altitude.

Some sunscreens say they are water-resistant or waterproof and can protect for about 40 minutes in the sun if a person is doing a water activity.

Applying a sunscreen

- Apply the sunscreen at least 30 minutes before going in the sun.
- Apply sunscreen to all the skin that will be exposed to the sun, including the nose, ears, neck, scalp, and lips. Sunscreen needs to be applied evenly over the skin and in the amount recommended on the label. Most sunscreens are not completely effective because they are not applied correctly. It usually takes about 1 fl oz (30 mL) to cover an adult's body.
- Apply sunscreen every 2 to 3 hours while in the sun and after [swimming](#) or [sweating](#) a lot. The SPF value decreases if a person sweats heavily or is in water, because water on the skin reduces the amount of protection the sunscreen provides. Wearing a T-shirt while swimming does not protect your skin unless sunscreen has also been applied to your skin under the T-shirt.

Other sunscreen tips

The following tips about sunscreen will help you use it more effectively:

- Older adults should always use a sunscreen with an SPF of at least 15 to protect their very sensitive skin.
- If you have sensitive skin that burns easily, use a sunscreen with an SPF of at least 15.
- If you have [dry skin](#), use a cream or lotion sunscreen.
- If you have oily skin or you work in dusty or sandy conditions, use a gel, which dries on the skin without leaving a film.
- If your skin is sensitive to skin products or you have had a skin reaction ([allergic reaction](#)) to a sunscreen, use a sunscreen that is free of chemicals, [para-aminobenzoic acid](#) (PABA), preservatives, perfumes, and alcohol.
- If you are going to have high exposure to the sun, consider using a [physical sunscreen](#) (sunblock), such as zinc oxide, which will stop all sunlight from reaching the skin.
- If you need to use sunscreen and insect repellent with DEET, do not use a product that combines the two. You can apply sunscreen first and then apply the insect repellent with DEET, but the sunscreen needs to be reapplied every 2 hours.

Do not use tanning booths to get a tan. Artificial tanning devices can cause skin damage and increase the risk of skin [cancer](#).

Source: <http://www.webmd.com/melanoma-skin-cancer/ss/slideshow-skin-lesions-and-cancer>