

The Many Faces of Skin Cancer

Know What to Watch

David V. Poole, MD

Skin cancers can have an innocent appearance, so it's possible that even someone who takes good care of his or her skin may not realize how important it is to get a lesion, mark, or mole checked out by an expert. If it turns out to be a skin cancer, every day you wait will allow the cancer to grow larger, making its treatment more difficult. While there are many different treatment options for skin cancers, if surgical removal is necessary, you want the cancer to be as small as possible.

Note that your esthetician may be aware of skin cancer symptoms and may be able to alert you to a change in your skin; however, he or she is not allowed

to diagnose skin cancer. For more information, visit the Skin Cancer Foundation.

Basal Cell Carcinoma

Basal cell carcinoma (BCC) is the most common form of skin cancer. It arises from the outer layer of the skin, and it has a strong relationship to sun exposure. It usually invades and destroys tissue only in the area where it is; spreading to another part of the body is rare. A typical BCC has a pearly or waxy nodule with a rolled border and tiny spider veins on and around it.

Squamous Cell

Squamous cell carcinoma (SCC) is the second most common form of malignant skin cancer. It accounts for

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Beautiful Skin!*



Keep an eye out for skin issues, as early detection is the key to successful treatment.

to make a diagnosis. Your practitioner may, though, be able to provide you with an appropriate referral to a dermatologist or other physician.

Following is a brief overview of the most common types of skin cancer. Additional details can be found at www.skincancer.org, the website of the

Skin Cancer Foundation. about 10 percent of all skin malignancies. It is also most commonly seen on sun-damaged skin, but it can arise without sun exposure or from various preexisting skin lesions, such as actinic keratoses, burn scars, radiation-exposed or treated skin, or even in areas of chronic skin irritation.

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Office Hours and Contact

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SCC is most often "local" but can spread to surrounding tissues or even other parts of the body. SCCs most often are found in red, irritated, sun-damaged skin. They often have a scaly, red, crusted appearance and may have an ulcer in them. The tissue is often fragile and may bleed easily when rubbed.

Malignant Melanoma

Malignant melanoma is the least common of the three main types of skin cancer, but it is the most dangerous. While there are several varieties of malignant melanoma, the only thing you absolutely need to know about them is that any of them can be deadly; malignant melanoma accounts for most of the deaths related to skin cancer. The most disturbing statistic is that despite public education campaigns about the dangers of sun exposure and skin cancer, the incidence of malignant melanoma in the United States continues to rise. Fair-skinned people, such as blondes and redheads in particular, need to watch their skin closely.

Any mole or pigmented spot on their body that changes in any way should be checked. If it gets bigger, darker, changes shape, has irregular edges, is or becomes asymmetric, has light and dark areas in it, or ever bleeds, it should be checked immediately. The ABCDs of melanoma are:

- A: Asymmetry
- B: Borders that are irregular
- C: Color changes
- D: Diameter that is enlarging

With early detection and treatment, most can be successfully removed and the patient completely cured. However, if not detected and treated early, these killers can spread to the lungs, the liver, the brain, and elsewhere.

Other Skin Things

It is important to note that not

everything that shows up on the skin is a skin cancer. Unfortunately, with age often comes a lot of skin "things." Actinic keratoses (patches of sun-damaged skin) are often seen as patches of dry, scaly skin that can be red and irritated. These are most often found on frequently sun-exposed areas of the body, such as the head and neck. If treated properly, these will go away. If left untreated, up to 20 percent will turn into skin cancer.

Seborrheic keratoses are often scary-looking skin lesions that enlarge over time. They are generally pigmented, and have a raised, wart-looking appearance. Cosmetically they can be unsightly, but fortunately have little potential to turn into skin cancer.

Dermatitis (irritation of the skin) comes in as many different shapes, sizes, varieties, and causes as you can think of. Things such as new laundry soap or a new piece of jewelry can cause what is known as contact dermatitis (irritation of the skin when something contacts it).

Often these will go away on their own, but treatments are available to reduce discomfort.

Advice to Live By

Remember, most of the things on the skin are not skin cancer. But for that small percentage that are, often the only way to know is to have it checked by a skin care expert. Early detection and treatment of skin cancer is the key to successful treatment and cure. Have any questionable spot on your skin evaluated by a physician. If necessary, ask for a referral to a dermatologist or plastic surgeon in your area who treats skin cancers on a regular basis. When in doubt, check it out.

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Sun protection is crucial for everyone, as sun damage is a leading cause of skin cancer.

Magical Mango

Shelly Burns

Treating yourself to a mango is a perfect way to add some sunshine to your routine. A mango is more than just a sweet, delicious fruit. It has properties beneficial to skin, including water-soluble vitamins like B2, B3, B6, folic acid (B9), and C. Mango is also a good source of beta-carotene and vitamin A.

Vitamin B complex delays skin's aging process. B vitamins provide a healthy glow, increased tone, and hydrated cells. The anti-inflammatory properties in B3 help skin retain moisture, alleviating dryness and irritation.

Vitamin C protects against the DNA damage that leads to skin cancer. This powerful antioxidant reduces the wrinkling effects of free radical damage, and combats other signs of aging by strengthening collagen and elastin.

Beta-carotene gives mango its wonderful

orange color and has an important role in protecting our skin's DNA. Dry, flaky skin can be remedied with the vitamin A derived from beta-carotene, which is important for repairing and maintaining healthy skin. Vitamin A has also been shown to help reduce and clear acne breakouts.

Other beneficial nutrients found in mango include magnesium, phosphorus, silica, sulfur, and vitamin E. These nutrients each play a role in strengthening the connective tissue in our body, including skin, bone, hair, nails, and muscle.

Mango is not just beneficial to skin. Its nutrients reduce high blood pressure, the risk of stroke, and the chance of contracting heart disease. Mango also contains approximately 20 percent of the recommended dietary intake of fiber and enzymes, which promote healthy digestion.

Mango is especially helpful for long, dry winters, but you can enjoy it at any time of year. It will help you maintain smooth skin and a healthy glow.



Mango offers a variety of health benefits

The Sunshine Vitamin

Shelley Burns

In the world of skin health, we focus on ways to improve skin quality. We work to prevent acne, cellular damage, dryness, and wrinkles. It is less common to discuss how a skin-care strategy may increase risk of developing other health conditions.

Skin cancer is one example. To prevent skin cancer, we protect ourselves with sunscreen--especially during the summer months. But by using sunscreen we are blocking the absorption of vitamin D, the "sunshine" vitamin.

Vitamin D is fat soluble and contains powerful antioxidant and anticarcinogenic properties that can prevent premature aging and cellular damage. Solid research indicates that

vitamin D plays a role in reducing the risk of cancer, specifically breast, colon, and prostate cancers. Vitamin D has been associated with preventing diabetes by reducing insulin sensitivity. It also improves heart health, reduces the risk of multiple sclerosis, strengthens bones, and decreases the effects of seasonal affective disorder.

Vitamin D can help resolve skin conditions like psoriasis, as it plays a role in skin cell regulation, including cell turnover and growth. Vitamin D can be effective in reducing the itching and flaking associated with this disorder. Ultraviolet B (UVB) treatments have long been used successfully in treating psoriasis because UVB produces vitamin D in the body.

Getting between 5-10 minutes of direct sun exposure daily on the arms, face, hands, and back (without sunscreen) can provide enough vitamin D to meet your daily requirements, though sun exposure does present a risk. Because it is difficult to obtain enough vitamin D through food, many prefer to use supplements. Research on the health benefits of ingesting vitamin D led experts to advise an intake of 25-50 micrograms daily.

Shelley Burns is a doctor of naturopathic medicine and completed studies at the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine. She has certification in complementary and integrative medicine from Harvard University.

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makeup.*

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You can also refer a friend for massage services and you and your referral will receive 50% off any massage from Jenny. If you want to visit us together for a visit please give me a call at 317-362-1449.

Spend a day with us in the Carmel Arts and Design District! You can spend a morning or afternoon in the peaceful oasis of The Ginkgo Tree and the rest of the day visiting galleries, strolling on the Monon, getting in a little shopping therapy, and lunch in one of the wonderful area restaurants. When you book a massage and facial service on the same day discounts for lunch at some of the local eateries will also be available!

To purchase skin care gift certificates give me a call or go to www.sherriclark.skincaretherapy.net/gift-certificates
For massage gift certificates and appointments contact Jenny Hartmann at 317-844-6546.

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