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Children and Skin Cancer



Did you know the chances for getting skin cancer increases, as we get older?
Are you doing all you can to promote **CHILDREN'S** sun-safety awareness?

Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the United States and yet it's the most preventable. The main reason people get skin cancer is they were exposed to too much sun on their skin, especially when they were young!

The better we protect children's skin from the sun now, there's a better chance they won't get skin cancer in the future. Pediatric melanoma is an important and steadily increasing problem among young adults. Females are more likely to sustain melanoma early in life most notably on their trunk and lower legs. Young women are more likely to participate in activities that increase the risk for melanoma, including using tanning beds.

Gigi the Giraffe is here to help you educate children on how to be safe in the sun! You can have fun in the sun and decrease your risk of skin cancer with these simple steps:

- Minimize summer sun exposure between 10:00 am – 2:00 pm
- Wear a wide brimmed hat, sunglasses and UV protective clothing. Even while swimming, wear a UV swim shirt.
- Apply sunscreen that provides UVB and UVA protection with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 30.
- Apply sunscreen 30 minutes BEFORE sun exposure and reapply after swimming or excessive sweating.
- Seek shade.
- Check the UV index daily in the summer.
- Check your birthday suit on your birthday.
- Avoid tanning beds.

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To find a free skin cancer screening in your area, log onto SpotSkinCancer.org or call 888-462-DERM (3376)

As a parent, guardian, teacher or coach, you spend many hours in the mid-day sun with children. Skin cancer evolves over time and the more exposure to the sun, the greater the chances for getting skin cancer. It's important that you and children are protected from the UV rays.

Below are some facts about skin cancer and children's risk factors:

- Approximately 40-60% of sun exposure occurs before age 20.
- Sunburns can happen within 15 minutes of being in the sun, but redness and discomfort may be noticed for a few hours later.
- Frequent sunburns can lead to skin cancer.
- Unprotected sun exposure is even more dangerous for kids who have moles, freckles, very fair skin and light hair, or a history of skin cancer.
- A person's risk for melanoma can double if they have had more than 5 sunburns at any age.
- Melanoma is the second most common form of cancer for young adults 15-29 years old.
- The incidence of melanoma in children 11-19 years of age has increased almost 3% per year from 1973 to 2001. The incidence rate of melanoma was positively correlated with environmental UV radiation.
- Melanoma accounts for approximately 7% of all cancers diagnosed in 15 to 19 year olds.

