

## Overview

Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer and accounts for nearly half of all cancers nationwide. There are three types of skin cancer: basal and squamous cell (most common and highly curable) and melanoma (most serious skin cancer).<sup>1</sup> The number of new cases of skin cancer diagnosed has been increasing in the United States over the past 30 years and could be prevented by reducing exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation, the primary cause of skin cancer.<sup>2</sup>

## Key Facts

- Current estimates are that one in five Americans will develop skin cancer in their lifetime.<sup>3</sup>
- Approximately 75% of skin cancer deaths in the US are due to melanoma.<sup>4</sup>
- In South Dakota, melanoma was the number one cause of cancer death in white women age 25 to 29 in 2005-2009.<sup>2</sup>
- Nationwide, skin cancer cases occur in whites more than any other racial/ethnic group and at a higher rate in men than women.<sup>5,6</sup>
- A total of 157 new cases of melanoma occurred in South Dakota in white adults, compared to 2 new cases in American Indian adults in 2010.<sup>2</sup>
- In 2013, 19.8% of South Dakota youth, grades 9-12, used an indoor tanning device such as a sunlamp, sunbed, or tanning booth during the past 12 months.<sup>8</sup>
- In 2011, 28% of South Dakota adults always or nearly always wore sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher when they were outside for more than one hour on a sunny day.<sup>7</sup>

## Risk Factors<sup>1</sup>

The main risk factor for skin cancer is exposure to UV radiation. Sunlight and indoor tanning exposes skin to UV radiation. General risk factors for developing skin cancer are:

- Family/personal history of skin cancer
- Exposure to UVA and UVB radiation from the sun and indoor tanning beds
- History of sunburns
- Skin that burns, freckles, reddens easily
- Fair skin color
- Blue or green eyes
- Blonde or red hair
- Certain types and a large number of ordinary moles
- Extended time spent outdoors

## Prevention and Detection

Skin cancer can be prevented by reducing exposure to UV rays year round and practicing sun safety. Prevention and detection recommendations include:<sup>1,9</sup>

- Use sunscreen, SPF 30 or higher and protects against UVA and UVB rays
- Avoid indoor tanning
- Stay in the shade, especially at peak hours
- Wear sunglasses that block UVA and UVB rays
- Wear clothing that covers your arms and legs, and a hat that protects your face, head, ears, and neck
- Consult a doctor if you notice changes in your skin such as size, shape, or color of a mole or other skin lesion or the appearance of a new skin growth<sup>3</sup>

## Resources

South Dakota Comprehensive Cancer Control Program: [www.cancersd.com](http://www.cancersd.com)

American Cancer Society: [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Skin Cancer, <http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/skin/>

<sup>2</sup> Melanoma in South Dakota, 2012, SD Cancer Registry, <http://getscreened.sd.gov/documents/Melanoma2012.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Skin Cancer, American Academy of Dermatology, <http://www.aad.org/>

<sup>4</sup> American Cancer Society, Facts and Figures 2014, <http://www.cancer.org/research/cancerfactsstatistics/cancerfactsfigures2014/index>

<sup>5</sup> SEER Stat Fact Sheets: Melanoma of the Skin, National Cancer Institute, <http://seer.cancer.gov/statfacts/>

<sup>6</sup> Ultraviolet Radiation, World Health Organization, <http://www.who.int/uv/en/>

<sup>7</sup> SD BRFS, 2011, <https://doh.sd.gov/statistics/>

<sup>8</sup> SD YRBS, 2013, <http://doh.sd.gov/Statistics/YRBS.aspx>

<sup>9</sup> Skin Cancer Prevention and Early Detection, American Cancer Society, <http://www.cancer.org/cancer/index>