



SKIN HEALTH

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SKIN CANCER

Free Skin Cancer Screening

- **Saturday, May 9, 2009, at St. Ann's Hospital Cancer Center**
- **9:00 AM—12:00 PM**
- **Call Mercy HealthLink to make appointment 419-251-6376**
- **Performed by Ana Thompson, M.D., Dermatologist**

FACTS

- There is no such thing as a safe tan from sunbathing or a tanning booth. Sunless tanners are a safe alternative; as long as their active ingredient is DHA.
- A person's risk for melanoma doubles if they have had five or more sunburns at any age.
- There are more new cases of skin cancer than a combination of breast, prostate, lung and colon cancer yearly.
- Melanoma is diagnosed more frequently in men over 50 years old.

The skin is the largest organ of the body and is as indispensable as the body's other major organs.

Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the United States. If left unchecked, these cancer cells can spread from the skin into other tissues and organs. If not treated, it can be deadly.

There are three major types of skin cancer—basal cell carcinoma, squamous cell carcinoma and melanoma; which is the most serious of skin cancer. Skin cancer begins in your skin's top layer—the epidermis. The epidermis is as thin as a pencil line, and it provides a protective layer of skin cells that your body continually sheds. Cancer develops

from the uncontrolled growth of abnormal skin cells.

The primary cause of skin cancer is regular exposure to sunlight or other ultraviolet radiation. Your type of complexion, genetics, exposure to toxic chemicals, and age are also known risks.

Sunlight provides much that is beneficial and even necessary to life and good health. Tanning and burning, however, are not among these benefits. Researchers have discovered that the tanning response begins only after DNA in the skin cells has been damaged. Tanning booths deliver high doses of radiation that penetrate the skin more deeply and increases the risk of cancer, especially mela-

noma, making them very dangerous.

Skin cancers have many different appearances. They can be small, shiny, waxy, scaly and rough, firm and red, crusty or bleeding, or have other features. A cancerous lesion can appear suddenly or develop slowly. Anything suspicious should be looked at by a physician.

Treatment for skin cancer depends on the size, type, and location of the lesion. Most require only a local anesthetic and can be removed in the doctor's office.

Remember, the sunburn you receive this week may take 20 years or more to become skin cancer. One serious sunburn can increase the risk by as much as 50%.

PREVENTION

burn and skin cancer:

- Minimize skin exposure between 10:00 AM and 3:00 PM.
- Apply at least 1 ounce of SPF-15 or higher sunscreen.
- Reapply sunscreen every 2 hours, even on cloudy days. Reapply after swimming or sweating.
- Wear clothing that covers your body and shades your face.
- Avoid sunlamps and tanning parlors.
- Protect your children. Apply sunscreen liberally. Keep infants out of the sun.