

Skin Cancer

**“Working Together ...
Adding Years to Our Lives”**

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“Spend less time in the sun but Remember to still Enjoy The Bahamas!”

Tips for Cancer Prevention

- Stay within a few pounds of our ideal recommended weight.
- Be physically active for at least 30 minutes every day.
- Limit our intake of sugary drinks.
- Add more fruits and vegetables to our diet.
- Cut down on the amount of red meats.
- Cut down on (or cut out) the amount of alcohol we drink.
- Limit the amount of salt we eat at each meal.
- Do not use over-the-counter or home brewed supplements to fight cancer.
- DO NOT SMOKE.
- Get at least 7 – 8 hours of sleep each day, in a quiet, dark room
- Visit our doctor or health clinic at least once per year, for a complete physical examination

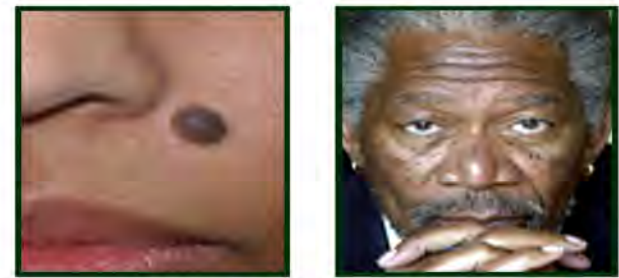


Prevention

Skin cancer is a disease that is mostly preventable. The main cause of skin cancer, over exposure to sunlight – is widely recognized. We can take some simple precautions in the sun to protect our skin and help reduce our risk of skin cancers. We can:

- Put on Sunscreen. We should use sunscreen with a sun protection factor of at least a Sun Protection Factor of 15 and have 3 stars (***) . We should put on our sunscreen an hour before we go outdoors in order for it to take full effect in the sun. SPF stands for Sun Protection Factor.
- Wear a hat that blocks the sun's rays from our faces.
- Wear sunglasses whenever we go outdoors.
- Wear loose-fitting clothes. Clothes act as a sunscreen because they protect our bodies from the sun's rays.
- Do Not fall asleep in the sun without wearing something that will provide protection from the sun.
- Go in the shade when the sun is hottest.

Know the Symptoms



It is not unusual to have some moles or freckles. Moles that change size, shape or colour, become bigger, itchy or inflamed, that weep or bleed; these may be symptoms of melanoma and should be checked by your doctor.

The cause of melanoma is not fully understood, it is thought to be linked to occasional exposure to short periods of intense burning sunlight; this type of skin cancer is more common in indoor than outdoor workers. Melanoma occurs more often in women than men and while most cancers are diseases of middle-age and later, melanoma is one of the most common cancers among 20-35 year olds.

Malignant Melanomas can develop unpredictably and may spread quickly to other parts of the body. However, if it is recognized and treated early, chances of survival are high.

Skin Cancer

Skin cancer is not the most common cancer in The Bahamas, but we can get it if we are not careful!

Skin cancer occurs more frequently in white people than black people.



Black people have more melanin in their skin, which provides a “warmer skin shade”, giving them greater protection from the sun.

This does not mean that black people do not have to worry about this particular cancer. Anyone can get skin cancer and it should not be taken lightly! Doctors have identified several different types of skin cancers. The most important distinction is between non-malignant melanoma and malignant melanoma skin cancer.

Non-Malignant Melanoma



Non-Malignant Melanoma at the bottom of a patient's foot.

Between 2 and 3 million non-malignant melanoma skin cancers occur worldwide each year. Non-malignant skin cancer (NMSC) is not usually deadly, but can be very disfiguring.

Non-Malignant Melanoma skin cancer on a patient's face.

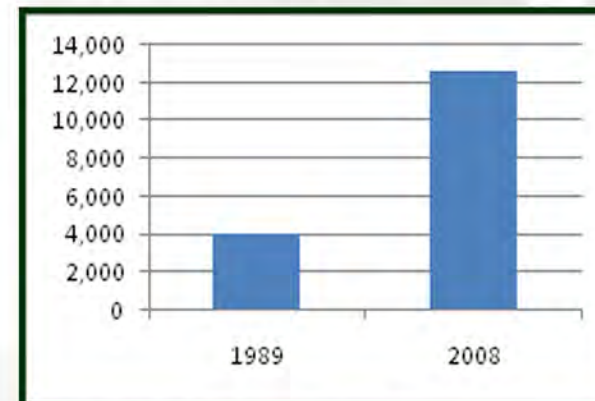
NMSC can be found on the face, neck, ears, forearms and hands – all parts of the body that are commonly exposed to the sun. NMSCs are found most often in outdoor workers and in the over - 50s age group. Most cases are caused by a lifetime of over-exposure to the sun.

Malignant Melanoma



Malignant Melanoma located on a man's chest.

Malignant Melanoma is the most dangerous type of skin cancer in the world. It is not common in The Bahamas. Cases of Malignant Melanoma are increasing worldwide. For instance, in 1989, there were approximately 4,000 cases; by 2008, there were more than 12,666 new cases in the world – approximately 1 in every 10 skin cancers.



Bar chart showing the increase of Malignant Melanoma skin cancer from 1989 to 2008 worldwide.

CSOB FUNDRAISERS

The Cancer Society's Annual Ball:
Hosted each year by the CSOB on the last Saturday in May, this Ball is one of the CSOB's major fund-raisers.

Annual Raffle:
Hosted in July each year, this is a major fund-raiser for the CSOB.

Stride For Life Walk:
Staged on the 1st Saturday in October each year, this is one of the CSOB's major fund-raisers.

Love Lights a Tree:
An early Christmas activity and fundraiser, this event is hosted in late November, on the grounds of the Mall-at-Marathon.

Thrift Shop:
Located on the ground floor of the Cancer Caring Centre, it operates weekly Tuesday-Saturday, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm.

Port-A-Cath's:
These are sold, at cost, to cancer patients and can be purchased Monday-Friday 8:00 am to 4:00 pm at the CSOB Headquarters.

