



SKIN CANCER FACTS

from ... **The Skin Cancer Foundation**

GENERAL

- Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the United States. More than one million skin cancers are diagnosed annually.³
- Each year there are more new cases of skin cancer than the combined incidence of cancers of the breast, prostate, lung and colon.³
- One in five Americans will develop skin cancer in the course of a lifetime.²⁶
- Basal cell carcinoma (BCC) is the most common form of skin cancer; about one million of the cases diagnosed annually are basal cell carcinomas.²⁹ Basal cell carcinomas are rarely fatal, but can be highly disfiguring.
- Squamous cell carcinoma (SCC) is the second most common form of skin cancer. More than 250,000 cases are diagnosed each year¹, resulting in approximately 2,500 deaths.²
- Basal cell carcinoma and squamous cell carcinoma are the two major forms of non-melanoma skin cancer. Between 40 and 50 percent of Americans who live to age 65 will have either skin cancer at least once.⁷
- In 2004, the total direct cost associated with the treatment for non-melanoma skin cancers was more than \$1 billion.¹⁴
- About 90 percent of non-melanoma skin cancers are associated with exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun.³⁰
- Up to 90 percent of the visible changes commonly attributed to aging are caused by the sun.¹⁶
- Contrary to popular belief, 80 percent of a person's lifetime sun exposure is not acquired before age 18; only about 23 percent of lifetime exposure occurs by age 18.⁸

MEN / WOMEN

- The majority of people diagnosed with melanoma are white men over age 50.¹⁹
- Contrary to popular belief, recent studies show that people receive a fairly consistent dose of ultraviolet radiation over their entire lifetime. Adults over age 40, especially men, have the highest annual exposure to UV.⁸
- The number of women under age 40 diagnosed with basal cell carcinoma has more than doubled in the last 30 years; the squamous cell carcinoma rate for women has also increased significantly.⁹
- Until age 39, women are almost twice as likely to develop melanoma as men. Starting at age 40, melanoma incidence in men exceeds incidence in women, and this trend becomes more pronounced with each decade.¹⁷

ETHNICITY

- The average annual melanoma rate among Caucasians is about 22 cases per 100,000 people. In comparison, African Americans have an incidence of one case per 100,000 people. However, the overall melanoma survival rate for African Americans is only 77 percent, versus 91 percent for Caucasians.²¹ www.TanMan.ca
- While melanoma is uncommon in African Americans, Latinos, and Asians, it is frequently fatal for these populations.⁶
- Melanomas in African Americans, Asians, Filipinos, Indonesians, and native Hawaiians most often occur on non-exposed skin with less pigment, with up to 60-75 percent of tumors arising on the palms, soles, mucous membranes and nail regions.²⁵
- Basal cell carcinoma (BCC) is the most common cancer in Caucasians, Hispanics, Chinese, and Japanese populations.²⁵
- Squamous cell carcinoma (SCC) is the most common skin cancer among African Americans and Asian Indians.²⁵
- Among non-Caucasians, melanoma is a higher risk for children than adults: 6.5 percent of pediatric melanomas occur in non-Caucasians.²³