

Preventing Skin Cancer A Young Person's Disease

It's June, and summertime is beginning! You've picked out a hot swimsuit and now you're ready to bake your skin to a golden crisp. However, one out of every 154 of you will someday be diagnosed with skin cancer and around 600 people in Utah this year will be diagnosed with Malignant Melanoma. Malignant Melanoma isn't just plain skin cancer, it's cancer which is clawing itself deeper into your body, grabbing hold of everything in its path. If you're diagnosed you'll try to yell backwards through the swift onslaught of years at your teenage self – **“that one bad sunburn before you turn 18 doubles your chances of melanoma!”** or **“even though it's a pain, wear sunscreen!”** Melanoma is a young person's disease and the most common form of cancer in young adults. This is the time to take action and prevent long-term damage.



“This is where they took the cancer out”

Watch the full video on
YouTube: *Dear 16-year-old me*

REMEMBER TO:

- **Limit sun exposure**
 - Peak sun hours are between 10am and 4pm, so try to limit the amount of sun exposure during this time.
- **Cover up**
 - Use clothing to cover and protect your skin.
 - Wear a hat. This helps protect your skin and eyes.
- **Wear Sunglasses**
 - You are supposed to wear sunglasses that block 99%-100% of both UVA and UVB rays. To buy the correct sunglasses, look for “UV absorption up to 400nm” or “Meets ANSI UV Requirements”.
- **Use Sunscreen**
 - The SPF (Sun Protection Factor) in sunscreen states how long the sunscreen will protect your skin from the sun. To find that out, take the SPF, times it by 15, and that is how long the sunscreen will protect your skin.
 - Apply and reapply sunscreen every 2 hours.
- **Avoid tanning beds**
 - Tanning beds *double* your risk of melanoma. Fair skin is beautiful!
- **You May be More at Risk if you**
 - have fair skin and/or red-hair
 - have at least 50 moles, a weakened immune system or a family history of skin cancer
- **Check your skin!**
 - Be on the lookout for new moles or existing ones that change color, size, shape, or feel different.

If you catch melanoma early it is easily treatable, however if you catch it late you have less than a 10% chance of surviving more than five years. The time is now – live with no regrets and prevent skin cancer.

For more information, search “Dear 16-year-old me” on YouTube to watch a powerful video.

Also visit: <http://www.cancer.org/Healthy/BeSafeintheSun/>