



## Maryland Skin Cancer Prevention Program 2009 Fact Sheet

- C Skin cancer is the most common type of cancer, with over 1 million new cases of the highly curable basal cell or squamous cell skin cancers expected in the United States this year.
- C The most serious form of skin cancer is melanoma, which is expected to be diagnosed in about 68,720 people in the U.S. in 2009. About 1,310 new cases of melanoma will be diagnosed in Maryland this year. The highest melanoma rates are on the Eastern Shore, the Baltimore Metropolitan Region, and Western Maryland.
- C Melanoma, while accounting for only about 5% of all skin cancers, is responsible for over 75% of skin cancer deaths.
- C Melanoma is the most rapidly increasing form of cancer, more than doubling in the last 30 years.
- C Although lighter skinned people are at a higher risk for developing melanoma, persons of all races and ethnic backgrounds are susceptible. In darker skinned people, melanoma may develop on the palms of the hands, the soles of the feet, or under the nails. It is often diagnosed at later stages resulting in a higher mortality rate.
- C On the positive side, malignant melanoma is the most preventable type of cancer. The major risk factor is childhood sunburn. Just one or two blistering sunburns double a person's chance of developing melanoma later in life.
- C Studies show that nearly 75% of teenagers experience at least one sunburn during the summer. Only about one third use sunscreen.
- C Tanning beds emit dangerous UV radiation and are linked to skin cancer. Ultraviolet radiation, both from the sun and from artificial sources, has been determined by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to be a "known human carcinogen."
- C The Program's *SunGuard Your Skin* program is a two-lesson curriculum, available to teachers free of charge, on SunGuard Man Online at [www.sunguardman.org](http://www.sunguardman.org). This web site also offers information, a cartoon adventure, videogames, activities, and contests for students.
- C Funded as of March 1, 2001 through a contract with the Maryland Department of Health & Mental Hygiene, Cigarette Restitution Fund Program, the Program works to increase skin cancer awareness and provide skin cancer prevention education to the citizens of Maryland, especially children and adolescents. The Program carries out many of its activities through a coalition of dedicated organizations and individuals, whose primary goal is to promote behavior that is likely to prevent skin cancer, and ultimately to make such behavior so familiar to the citizens of Maryland that it is established as a social norm.