

# Melanoma Fact Sheet

There is an urgent need to increase awareness and improve the diagnosis and treatment of melanoma



## IT'S A FACT!

- Melanoma is the deadliest form of skin cancer. Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the U.S.
- Every hour of every day one American dies from melanoma.
- In 2015, it is expected that approximately 74,000 Americans will be diagnosed with Stage I-IV melanoma and another 63,000 will be diagnosed with melanoma in situ – totaling nearly 137,000 diagnoses.
- Melanoma is one of the fastest growing cancers in the U.S. and worldwide.
- Melanoma does not discriminate by age, gender or race. Everyone is at risk.
- Melanoma is the leading cause of cancer death in women ages 25-30 and the second leading cause of cancer death in women ages 30-35.
- In ages 15-29, melanoma is the second most commonly diagnosed cancer.
- The incidence of people under 30 developing melanoma is increasing faster than any other demographic group, soaring by 50% in women since 1980.
- Nearly 90% of melanomas are thought to be caused by exposure to UV light and sunlight.
- It takes only one blistering sunburn, especially at a young age, to more than double a person's chance of developing melanoma later in life.
- The World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) classifies tanning devices into the highest cancer risk category – carcinogenic to humans.
- Exposure to tanning beds before age 30 increases a person's risk of developing melanoma by 75%.
- Young people who regularly use tanning beds are 8 times more likely to develop melanoma than people who have never used them.
- Melanoma is not just a skin cancer. It can develop anywhere on the body – eyes, scalp, nails, feet, mouth, etc.
- The lifetime risk of getting melanoma is about 1 in 50 for Caucasians, 1 in 1000 for African Americans and 1 in 200 for Hispanics.
- Follow these tips to protect your skin:
  - Seek shade when possible
  - Cover up with clothing, sunglasses and a wide-brimmed hat
  - Try to avoid being in the sun between 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
  - Use a broad-spectrum sunscreen with SPF of at least 30 and reapply every two hours

All references can be found on the MRF's website at [www.melanoma.org](http://www.melanoma.org)

Updated 3-16-15

## MELANOMA RESEARCH FOUNDATION

1411 K Street NW, Suite 800 | Washington, DC 20005

T 202.347.9675 or 1.800.MRF.1290

[www.melanoma.org](http://www.melanoma.org)

RESEARCH  
EDUCATE  
ADVOCATE