

Skin Cancer Information for Men

At one point skin cancer was thought to be a woman's disease. After all, many more women sunbathe than men. In a society where it is still valuable to seek the approval of men, women tend to obsess more about how they look and trying to be attractive, and thus they will spend more time sunbathing and tanning. A least that's what most people thought. Recent studies are proving some surprising results when it comes to skin cancer rates and who's affected.

The rates of men getting skin cancer are rising steadily. Cases of skin cancer among men have increased by 12 percent in the last six years. The rise for women has only been two percent over the same amount of time. With men the skin cancer is often found on their backs, a difficult place to track changes if you're not looking for them. Men are less likely to conduct a self-examination and less likely to find these abnormal moles. Another reason for them developing on the back is that when men work outside without shirts on, so they are often working with their backs to the sun. Based on current social mores and legal restrictions, we frequently see a man working outside topless while woman do not. Men often do summer jobs such as lawn mowing, exterior house painting, or their own car repairs. Studies also report that, unexpectedly, men over forty are outside more than their younger counterparts.

Recent studies have reported that 44 percent of men over 50 years old are developing skin cancer. Of this category, 97 percent are Caucasian. Of that group 37 percent were light skinned. 28 percent of them have a family history of skin cancer, while 33 percent had a history of growing moles that had changed in appearance before. Some of the reasons blamed for these dramatic increases in skin cancer in men include travel, an increase in summer activities including water sports, soccer and basketball, and an appearance of more convertibles on the street. Other reasons are that although they will often wear hats in the sun, mainly for appearance, they are less likely to use sunscreens.

African Americans are far less likely to develop skin cancer and when they do it's typically on the soles of the feet or palms of their hands. This demonstrates that the sun's rays are unlikely to be the cause of these cancers. So far researchers do not seem to have the answers to what is the cause. Strangely, African Americans have a higher mortality rate despite the lower risk.

Men have a lower prospect for recovery than women. Survival rates are not optimistic unless the cancer is discovered early. In contrast, if it is discovered early the recovery rate is quite good. Doctors say that one of the biggest problems with men and skin cancer, though studies show it's men and any health problem, is the male reluctance to go to their health care provider when a problem is found. Delays in seeing the doctor when you have a suspicious mole can make the difference between a treatment and death.