

7 Key Sunscreen Facts to Keep in Mind this Memorial Day Weekend

A New Study from the Skin Cancer Prevention Working Group Highlights 7 Important Factors for Sunscreen Selection and Skin Cancer Prevention.

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, May 25, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Skin cancer is the most

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Justin W. Marson, MD

common type of cancer, outnumbering all other new cancer diagnoses 3 to 1 with over 5.4 million new skin cancers diagnosed annually and almost 10,000 new skin cancers diagnosed each day in the US. More importantly, the rate of new skin cancer diagnoses has dramatically increased over the past few decades. With this in mind, it has become even more important to understand the proper strategies to protect your skin from harmful ultraviolet radiation that can more rapidly age your skin, damage DNA, and lead to skin cancer.

The proper and regular use of sunscreen is one of the best ways to reduce the future risk of developing skin cancer. However, studies have found many Americans are either confused by the sheer quantity of news and information surrounding sunscreens or don't understand the risk factors for developing skin cancer. A new study published in [SKIN, the Journal of Cutaneous Medicine](#) reviewed 96 studies about skin cancer and sunscreen to develop evidenced-based recommendations for both physicians and patients.

Justin W. Marson, MD, and co-authors, members of the non-profit [Skin Cancer Prevention Working Group](#) (a panel of physicians with additional specialized training in the prevention, diagnosis, and management of skin cancer) developed 7 statements defining the current state and importance of sunscreen use in the US.

The study highlighted the fact that the rate of newly diagnosed skin cancers has continued to grow over the last several decades and poses a verifiable public health threat, given 1 in 5 Americans will develop skin cancer in their lifetime. Although there are many risk factors for developing skin cancer (red hair, fair skin, childhood sunburns, age, family history/genetics), not many can be modified.

"A major skin cancer risk factor that individuals can control is the amount of ultraviolet radiation

(UV) that they are exposed to," said Alex Glazer, MD, co-author and dermatologist with the Dermatology Science and Research Foundation in Buffalo Grove, IL. "One of the best ways to reduce UV exposure and the future risk of skin cancer is by regularly and properly using sunscreen."

In the authors' opinion, existing barriers to sunscreen usage are exacerbated by third party groups that tend to use non-scientific rating criteria for sunscreens or make potentially misleading statements regarding sunscreen safety. Studies performed in highly-controlled, laboratory settings have found minimal evidence that certain organic sunscreen agents, when consumed in excess of up to 5 times normal concentrations, may have an effect on the human body. However, randomized-controlled trials have reinforced sunscreen safety.

"Interestingly, real life experiments are essentially being conducted every day," said Dr. Marson. "Tens of millions of people use sunscreens on a daily basis to prevent their future risk of skin cancer without developing any of these hypothetical long-term harms."

Additionally, although studies found that feeding or injecting sunscreen agents directly into marine wildlife at very high doses can disrupt hormonal functions and affect coral resilience and induce coral bleaching, this study determined that real-world data suggests climate change and rising global and seawater temperatures are the more likely direct causes of eroding marine wildlife.

"At the end of the day, the data demonstrate that the benefits that sunscreens provide in preventing skin cancer far outweigh any hypothetical risks," said Richard Winkelmann, DO, co-author and Mohs Surgeon with OptumCare in Los Angeles, CA.

"Because dermatologists practice at the intersection of science and clinical medicine, they are uniquely qualified to be leaders in this space," said Aaron Farberg, MD, co-author and Mohs Surgeon at Baylor University Medical Center in Dallas, TX. "By continuing to research and educate the public on evidenced-based care regarding sunscreens and skin cancer, dermatologists can empower their patients to live healthier lives, safely enjoy time outdoors, and minimize their risk for developing skin cancer."

For more information about the Skin Cancer Prevention Working Group, please visit dsr.foundation/skincancer.

SKIN: The Journal of Cutaneous Medicine® is a peer-reviewed online medical journal that is the official journal of The National Society for Cutaneous Medicine. The mission of SKIN is to provide an enhanced and accelerated route to disseminate new dermatologic knowledge for all aspects of cutaneous disease.

For more details please visit www.jofskin.org or contact jofskin@gmail.com.

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