



# You've got it made in the shade

## Protect yourself from skin cancer

Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the United States, but it is also the most preventable.<sup>1</sup> Since more than 90% of all skin cancers are caused by sun exposure, taking simple steps to protect yourself can make a big difference.<sup>2</sup>

### Protect yourself<sup>1,3</sup>

- Protect your skin by staying inside or in the shade between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., when ultraviolet rays are the strongest and most damaging.
- Wear sunscreen that offers ultraviolet A (UVA) and ultraviolet B (UVB) protection, with a sun protective factor (SPF) of 15 or higher every time you go outside.
- Be sure to put on more sunscreen at least every two hours and whenever you have gone swimming or dried off with a towel, or when you've been sweating a lot – even if your sunscreen is waterproof.
- Wear protective clothing, including a wide-brimmed hat and wraparound sunglasses that block as close to 100% of UVA and UVB rays as possible.

### The ABCDEs of melanoma<sup>4</sup>

Melanoma is the most serious form of skin cancer, but it is nearly always curable if it is caught early. Know the difference between a normal, harmless mole and one that could be cancerous by evaluating growths for these five traits:

- **Asymmetry.** The two halves of the mole do not match if you were to draw a line through it.
- **Border.** An early melanoma often has uneven edges.
- **Color.** A growth that is more than one color should prompt a visit to your doctor for further evaluation.
- **Diameter.** A melanoma is usually larger than the size of a pencil eraser, although they can be smaller when first detected.
- **Evolving.** Any change in size, shape or color, or any new symptom such as bleeding, itching or crusting, is a sign that you should make a call to your doctor.

If you notice any change on your skin, including new growths, moles that are changing, sores that won't heal or even symptoms that seem like eczema or psoriasis, make an appointment with your doctor.

**If you notice any change on your skin, make an appointment with your doctor. Skin cancer treatments are much more effective on cancers that are found early.**



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Sources

1 Prevent Cancer Foundation website: Skin Cancer (accessed December 2014): [preventcancer.org](http://preventcancer.org).

2 Skin Cancer Foundation website: Skin Cancer Facts (accessed December 2014): [skincancer.org](http://skincancer.org).

3 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website: What Are the Risk Factors for Skin Cancer? (accessed December 2014): [cdc.gov/cancer/skin/basic\\_info/risk\\_factors](http://cdc.gov/cancer/skin/basic_info/risk_factors).

4 Skin Cancer Foundation website: Do You Know Your ABCDEs? (accessed December 2014): [skincancer.org](http://skincancer.org).