癌症基金會
CANCERFUND
So no one faces cancer alone

Prevent skin cancer
Be SunSmart!

FREE Helpline
3656 0800
www.cancer-fund.org/sunsmart

How does UV cause skin cancer?

Ultraviolet (UV) rays in sunlight can induce genetic mutations in skin cells. Excessive UV exposure can not only cause sunburn and pain, it increases the risk of developing skin cancer. It will also cause the skin to age and create wrinkles. The longer you are exposured, the higher your risk.

9th — **Non-melanoma skin cancer is the ninth most common cancer in Hong Kong***

1,000+ — **Since 2013, there have been over 1,000 new cases of skin cancer diagnosed in Hong Kong each year*^**

UV — **Preventing excessive UV exposure is the most effective way to prevent skin cancer**

3 UV Index — **UV index higher than 3, indicates the suns rays are strong enough to cause sunburn**

* Hong Kong Cancer Registry, Hospital Authority 2022 (2020 statistics)
^ Skin cancer includes melanoma and non-melanoma skin cancer

What causes strong UV light?

We're all exposed to UV radiation from the sun on a daily basis. UV radiation is most dangerous when the sun's rays are at their most direct and intense, which depends on:

Time of year – UV radiation remains high all year round, but the months of highest risk in Hong Kong are usually July to October.

Time of day – UV rays are strongest between 11am and 4pm, and are most intense around midday.

Reflection – UV radiation can be reflected from surfaces such as sand, light paint, tiles, cement and water, and can therefore reach your skin even if you're wearing a hat.

Clouds – UV radiation is both absorbed and scattered by clouds and haze, but your skin can still burn on a cloudy day.

Check the Observatory's UV Index forecast before leaving home. The higher the UV Index level, the stronger the UV light.

Five Hot Tips for Being SunSmart!

- **SLIP** — Slip on a shirt
- **SLOP** — Slop on some sunscreen
- **SLAP** — Slap on a wide-brimmed hat
- **SLIDE** — Slide on some sunglasses
- **SEEK** — Seek some shade

Guideline to shade, Cancer Council Australia 2013

Tips for using sunscreen

Sunscreen can form a protective layer on the skin, but a small amount of UV will still penetrate through, so there is still a chance of sunburn and skin damage.

- **Apply sun screen 15-30 minutes before going outside**
- **Use sunscreen with SPF 30 and PA++ or higher#**
- **Reapply at least every two hours, or more if you are swimming or in the water**

\# PA (Protection Grade of UVA) and SPF (Sun Protection Factor) are the measures of how well a sunscreen will protect skin from UVA rays and UVB rays respectively. UVA rays can cause skin aging such as wrinkles and sagging whiles UVB rays can cause sunburn, damages skin, and can contribute to skin cancer.

Types of skin cancer

Skin cancer can appear in different shapes and can grow in different parts of the body, such as cheeks, scalp, ears, lips, shoulders, and thighs.

- **Skin Cancer**
  - **Non-Melanoma**
    - **Basal cell carcinoma**
    - **Squamous cell carcinoma**
  - **Melanoma**

If you have concerns about your skin, moles, or freckles, consult your doctor for advice. Early detection saves lives.

Symptoms of skin cancer

Basal cell carcinoma

Initially, a raised bump or lump appears on the skin, which can be red or pearl-like in colour. It may also appear with a rash or with the skin peeling. It gradually widens and forms a scab, it is sometimes accompanied by itching, bleeding, and ulceration.

Squamous cell carcinoma

Most often appears as a pinkish nodule with a hard, scaly surface. It frequently bleeds and may develop into an ulcer.

Melanoma

Melanoma is the most severe and least common type of skin cancer. It can occur from existing moles, so using the 'ABCDE self-check method' can detect early signs of melanoma. If you have one of the signs below or have any concerns about your skin, moles, or freckles, please consult your doctor for advice.

ABCDE self-check method

Asymmetrical: Uneven shape
Border: Irregular edges
Colour: Uneven colour, multiple colours
Diameter: Larger than 6 mm
Enlargement: Expanding over time, changing colour, or increasing volume

Thanks to Dr. Chan Hau Ngai, Kingsley, Dermatologist, for his help in reviewing this leaflet.

FREE Cancer Support

Call us if you or someone you know would like to benefit from our FREE cancer support services.

Donate Now

Hong Kong Cancer Fund