



MODERN DERMATOLOGY

WESTPORT, CT

1032 Post Road East, Westport, CT 06880

tel (203) 635-0770 | fax (203) 635-0771

www.moderndermct.com

SKIN CANCER INFORMATION SHEET

At Modern Dermatology we believe that maintaining healthy skin involves a personalized relationship between you and your doctor. When it comes to skin cancer, we feel passionately about educating our patients, not just diagnosing them - so, in honor of skin cancer awareness month we pulled together some of the most important points for your education.

KNOW THE NUMBERS

- 20% of Americans will develop skin cancer - skin cancer is the most common type of cancer in the United States
- More than 2 people die of skin cancer every hour
- 5+ sunburns double your risk of melanoma
- 50% of our sun exposure occurs after the age of 40 so it's never too late to protect your skin!
- Melanoma early detection five-year survival rate in the U.S. is 99%

REVIEW YOUR RISKS

Tanning, sunburn, atypical moles, UV radiation, photosensitivity, genetics + skin type all impact your risk for developing skin cancer. Specifically, using a tanning bed just 1x before age 35 may increase your risk of developing life-threatening melanoma by 75% - please be honest with us about your sunburn + tanning history, we won't judge, promise!

SHOWER SURVEILLANCE

We encourage you to regularly check your skin and nails in between skin exams - try creating a routine of doing this in the shower monthly. A key warning sign of skin cancer is something that is new, changing or unusual - when you're attuned to what's happening with your skin, you're most likely to notice something suspicious early, which is critical in determining treatment outcome. If you see something, say something - we're available for "spot checks" in between your regularly scheduled skin cancer screening exams.

- New: new moles or blemishes
- Changing: changes in color, shape, size or texture
- Unusual: bleeding, itching or crusting

KNOW YOUR ABCDEs

In addition to keeping an eye on new, changing and unusual lesions, you should also review your skin through the lens of the ABCDEs.

- **A - Asymmetry:** one half does not match the other
- **B - Border:** uneven border
- **C - Color:** variety of color like brown, tan and black
- **D - Diameter:** grows larger than the size of a pencil eraser
- **E - Evolving:** change in size, shape, color, elevation or a new symptom such as bleeding

PREVENTION POWER

Regardless of your risk factors there are actions in your control that can prevent skin cancer and aid in the prompt and successful treatment of skin cancer.

The shining star is **SPF!** It's important to wear an **SPF 30+** daily and to reapply every 2hrs and immediately after swimming or sweating when you're out in the sun. It's also important to understand what kind of **SPF** you are using so you can apply it correctly for the most effective protection.

- **Chemical SPF:** Chemical sunscreens absorb into the skin where they absorb UV rays, convert the rays into heat, and release them from the body. The active ingredients in chemical sunscreens include avobenzone, octinoxate and oxybenzone. For chemical sunscreens to work they need to be applied directly onto clean skin so they can be absorbed and do their job.
- **Physical SPF:** Physical sunscreens sit on top of the skin and create a physical barrier that reflects the sun's rays. The minerals titanium dioxide and zinc oxide are the main active ingredients in physical sunscreens. If you're using a physical sunscreen it needs to be the last thing you apply in your skincare routine for it to work.

We sell our favorite **SPFs** at the office and on our [eShop](#) from brands Supergoop, ISDIN, Skinbetter, Vanicream, EltaMD, Alastin and MD Solar Sciences.

SKIN CANCER SCREENINGS + SPOT CHECKS

Plan your annual skin cancer screenings ahead of time, these are longer appointments and book out months in advance.

In between visits call us for "spot checks" - these appointments are an opportunity to have a suspicious lesion examined and to determine if a biopsy or follow up care is recommended.

Talk to your doctor about [Skin IO](#) - digital mole mapping for skin cancer detection. This is a cutting-edge technology at Modern Dermatology that digitally maps your moles for more precise monitoring of changes in existing moles and identifying new spots.