

# **Sun Safety and Skin Cancer in Idaho and the U.S. Key Facts**

## **What is the Impact of Skin Cancer in Idaho and the U.S.?**

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- Between 2002 and 2006, there were 218 deaths in Idaho from melanoma and 1,588 cases of invasive melanoma.
- Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the United States. More than 1 million skin cancers are diagnosed annually.
- The *American Cancer Society Cancer Facts and Figures, 2008* projected that in 2008, approximately 11,200 Americans would die from skin cancer (8,420 from melanoma and 2,780 from other non-epithelial skin cancers).
- Basal cell carcinoma is the most common form of skin cancer.
- Squamous cell carcinoma is the second most common form of skin cancer. More than 250,000 cases are diagnosed each year, resulting in approximately 2,500 deaths each year in the United States.
- The most serious form of skin cancer is melanoma. The American Cancer Society estimates 62,480 Americans will be newly diagnosed in 2008.
- Survival rates from melanoma vary based on how far the disease has spread at the time of diagnosis. For cases detected early, the 5-year survival rate is about 97%. For cases detected later, the survival rate falls to between 15 and 65%.

## **What are the costs of Skin Cancer?**

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- In 2004, the total direct cost associated with the treatment for non-melanoma skin cancer was \$1.5 billion in the U.S.
- The cost of melanoma in the U.S. is more than \$740 million annually.

## **Who Gets Melanoma of the Skin?**

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- Melanoma rates increase with age.
- Melanoma is primarily a disease of Whites; rates are more than 10 times higher in Whites than African Americans.
- While melanoma is uncommon in African-Americans, Latinos, and Asians, it is most deadly for these populations because it is more likely to develop undetected.
- From 2002 to 2006, more men were diagnosed with melanoma than women (942 invasive cases among men vs. 646 among women) and more men died from melanoma (151 men vs. 67 women) in Idaho.
- There is an increased incidence of melanoma in higher income groups.

## **What Factors Contribute to Increased Risk for Skin Cancer?**

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- A major risk factor for melanoma of the skin is a personal or family history of melanoma and the presence of moles (especially if there are many or they are unusually large).
- Exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation, either naturally from the sun or from artificial sources such as tanning devices, appears to be the most significant factor in the development of skin cancer.
- Receiving one or two blistering sunburns before the age of 18 at least doubles an individual's risk for developing melanoma.
- Intermittent exposure to ultraviolet radiation (e.g. white collar workers who vacation at the beach) has been shown to be a greater risk than chronic exposure for developing melanoma.

## **How Often Should People Get Screenings?**

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- The American Cancer Society recommends skin examination by a trained professional every three years for those aged 20 to 39 and annually after age 40 as part of a periodic check-up.

## What are Sun Safety and Prevention Strategies?

- Skin cancer is largely preventable when sun protection measures are used consistently.
- The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) recommends that sunscreen be used in combination with other sun protection behaviors.
- Protective measures that may reduce the risk of skin cancer: 1) avoid the sun between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m.; 2) wear sun-protective clothing when exposed to sunlight; 3) use sunscreen with a sun-protective factor (SPF) of 15 or higher; and 4) avoid artificial sources of ultraviolet light.

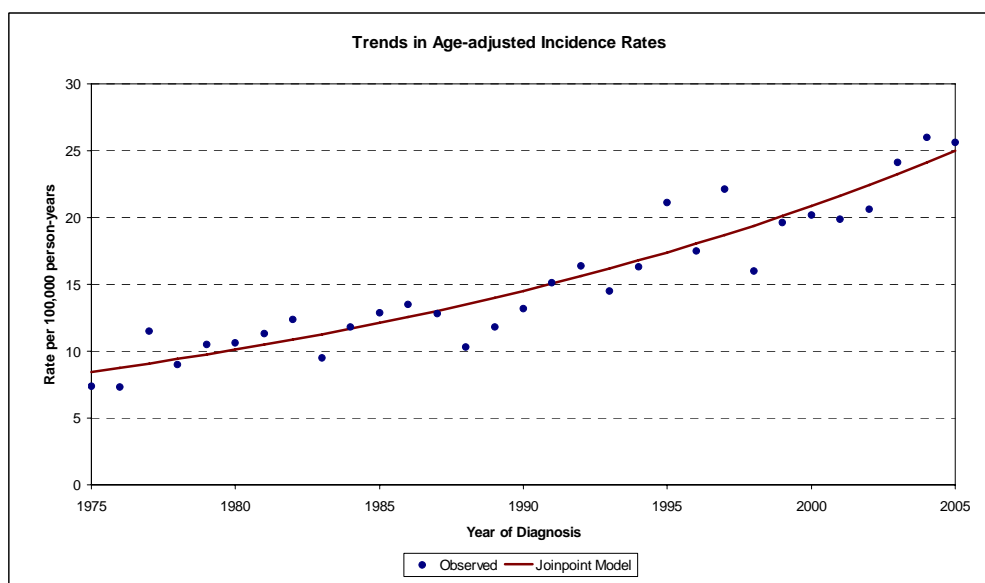
*Note: Idaho spans two time zones; the 5 p.m. guideline is necessary to cover southern Idahoans.*

### Sunburns by Public Health District

Idaho Adults aged 18 and older who reported having a sunburn in the past 12 months, BRFSS 2004

	Statewide	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	District 7
<b>Sunburn in Previous 12 Months</b>	48.0%	41.9%	46.6%	45.3%	49.8%	47.3%	51.0%	53.2%

### Trends in Melanoma of the Skin Incidence, Idaho, 1975-2005



#### Sources for Data

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- 9- *Unpublished*, Cancer Data Registry of Idaho, April 2008.