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**Southwest Center**  
FOR AGRICULTURAL HEALTH, INJURY PREVENTION, AND EDUCATION

## Monthly Blast | June 2020

Produced by the SW Ag Center

# Sun Safety

## Take Sun Safety Seriously

Skin Cancer is the most common form of cancer in America. Every year millions of Americans are diagnosed with skin cancer. Fortunately, it is one of the most preventable forms of cancer. The majority of skin cancer cases are directly associated with exposure to ultraviolet radiation from the sun. It is important for everyone to know about skin cancer, and how to prevent it, but it is even more important for those within the agricultural, forestry, and fishing sectors. If you are working cattle, clearing land, or checking the water quality of a lake you are at risk for sun exposure. Over time, sun exposure can lead to skin cancer.

The following are the most common types of skin cancer.

### TYPES OF SKIN CANCER:



#### **ACTINIC KERATOSIS**

*PRECANCEROUS GROWTH.*

Scaly crusty growths that form in areas most exposed to the sun: face, scalp, lips and the back of the hands.



#### **ATYPICAL MOLES**

*BENIGN GROWTHS THAT LOOK SIMILAR TO MELANOMA.*

People who have atypical moles have an increased risk of developing melanoma.



#### **MERKEL CELL CARCINOMA**

*RARE AGGRESSIVE FORM OF SKIN CANCER.*

This form of skin cancer has a high risk of recurring or spreading.



#### **MELANOMA**

*THE DEADLIEST FORM OF SKIN CANCER.*

Caused mainly by UV exposure, or those who are genetically predisposed to the disease.



#### **SQUAMOUS CELL CARCINOMA**

*SECOND MOST COMMON TYPE OF SKIN CANCER*

Can appear on any part of the body but typical forms in areas exposed to the sun. If it goes untreated it can become deadly.



#### **BASAL CELL CARCINOMA**

*MOST COMMON TYPE OF SKIN CANCER.*

These growths form in the outermost layer of the skin. This type of skin cancer generally never spreads to other parts.



INFORMATION VIA THE SKIN CANCER FOUNDATION

Image Source: <https://dermskincancercenter.com/types-of-skin-cancer/>

## ABCDEs of Skin Cancer

Early detection of skin cancer can drastically improve outcomes. Although the ABCDE chart is not a perfect tool, it can help you identify suspicious growth. If you have a mole or spot that meets any of the criteria below, immediately make an appointment to see your doctor or dermatologist.

### Protecting Yourself

The spring and summer months are the most dangerous times to be exposed to UV rays and the UV rays are at their strongest between 10 am and 4 pm. Some people think you cannot be exposed to UV rays on a cloudy day, but the ultraviolet rays can still get through the clouds. Below are some strategies and materials you can use to protect yourself from harmful UV rays.



### Clothing:

If possible, wear long sleeved shirts with long pants, a hat and sunglasses. These types of clothing will provide you with the best protection from the sun. Dark or bright colors help prevent the UV rays from reaching the skin, because it absorbs them rather than letting them penetrate through. Some clothing lines make ultraviolet protection factor (UPF) labeled clothing. For extra protection, look for UPF labels.

Image Source: <https://www.theinsideexperience.com/abcde-of-melanoma-skin-cancer-the-information-one-should-have/>



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## Sunscreen:

Sunscreens are an effective way to protect yourself from harmful UV rays if you do not have proper clothing. Nearly all sunscreens are assigned with a sun protection factor (SPF), which rates their effectiveness for blocking the ultraviolet light.

The higher numbers indicate more protection, and you should use a sunscreen with at least a SPF 15. Like most good things, sunscreen does not last forever. Therefore, reapplying sunscreen is a must if you are going to be out in the sun for long periods. Most sunscreens give a reapplication time listed on the bottle. Water resistant sunscreens are great to use if you will be in the water, but they still need to be reapplied after the recommended time.



**Make sure to protect yourself from the sun and take a close look at any suspicious spots. Get a professional opinion for anything that meets any of the ABCDE criteria.**

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Stay safe | Stay healthy**

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[content/uploads/2015/07/skin-cancer-graphic-4June-A.jpg](#).

**This monthly blast was written by the 2020 CASH Intern, Blake Brawley.**

To learn more about the CASH Internship, visit <https://www.uthct.edu/swagc-noble-foundation-safety-internship>.

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