

# 8 risk factors for skin cancer



**Skin cancer is the most common cancer in the United States.**

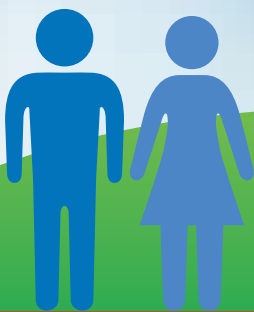
- Red or blond hair, fair skin, freckles and blue or light-colored eyes
- More than 50 moles
- History of frequent or intense sun exposure
- History of tanning bed use
- One or more blistering sunburns
- Family history of melanoma
- Personal history of melanoma
- Personal history of basal cell and/or squamous cell skin cancers

▶ **If you have one or more of these risk factors, consult your doctor or schedule a skin cancer screening exam.**

**Most skin cancers fall into one of these three categories:**

- **Basal cell** is a slow-growing cancer that seldom spreads.
- **Squamous cell** is more likely than basal cell to spread, but it is much less common.
- **Melanoma** makes up only two percent of skin cancers, but causes the most skin cancer deaths.

Always be on the lookout for moles, spots or bumps that change or grow.



**Having dark skin does not protect you from skin cancer.**

The disease is increasing among African-Americans and Hispanics.

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# Lower your skin cancer risk

## Stay in the shade

Look for shady areas when outside. Avoid going outdoors between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

## Use sunscreen and lip balm

Apply liberally, 30 minutes before going outside. Reapply every two hours.

Choose products with **SPF 30** or higher.

## Cover up

Wear dark, tightly woven clothing.

Pick a hat with a large brim to protect your ears and neck.

## Use extra caution

Water, snow and sand amplify the sun's rays.

## Skip the tanning bed

Tanning beds are not a safe alternative to the sun.

## Wear sunglasses

Look for lenses that provide both UVA and UVB protection.

[www.mdanderson.org/skin-safety](http://www.mdanderson.org/skin-safety)

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