



# Healthy Skin Education in Alabama's Schools

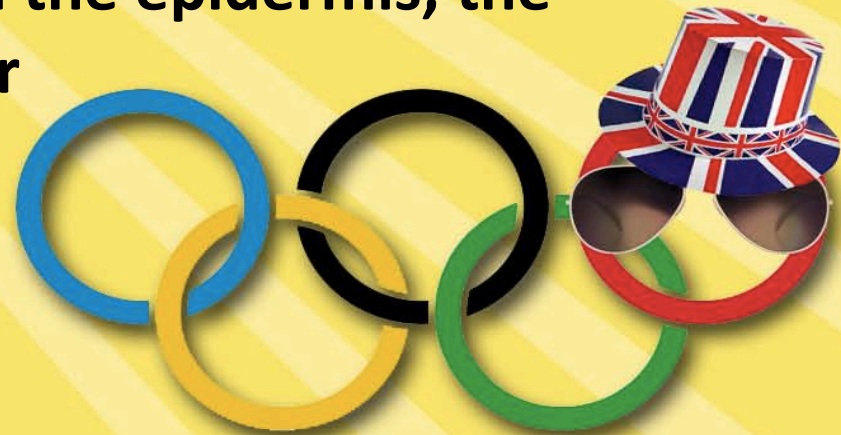
Alabama Comprehensive Cancer Control Program



**Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the US.**

**Skin cancer is the uncontrolled growth of abnormal skin cells. Cancer develops when DNA, the molecule found in cells that encodes genetic information, becomes damaged and the body cannot repair the damage. These damaged cells begin to grow and divide uncontrollably. When this occurs in the skin, skin cancer develops.**

**As the damaged cells multiply, they form a tumor. Since skin cancer generally develops in the epidermis, the outermost layers of skin, a tumor is usually clearly visible. This makes most skin cancers detectable in the early stages.**



The three most common types of skin cancer are Basal Cell Carcinoma (BCC), Squamous Cell Carcinoma (SCC) and Melanoma.



Basal Cell Carcinoma



Squamous Cell Carcinoma



Melanoma



# Basal Cell Carcinoma Characteristics

- **Abnormal , uncontrolled growths or lesions**
- **Often look like open sores, red patches, pink growths, shiny bumps or scars**
- **Can be highly disfiguring**
- **Almost never spreads beyond the original tumor site**



# Squamous Cell Carcinoma Characteristics

- Look like scaly red patches, open sores, elevated growths with a central depression or warts
- Caused by cumulative UV exposure over a lifetime
- Can be deadly if allowed to grow



Melanoma is the most dangerous form of skin cancer. It is caused when unrepaired DNA damage to skin cells (most often by UV exposure) triggers mutations that lead the skin cells to multiply and form malignant tumors.

## The ABCDE of Melanoma:



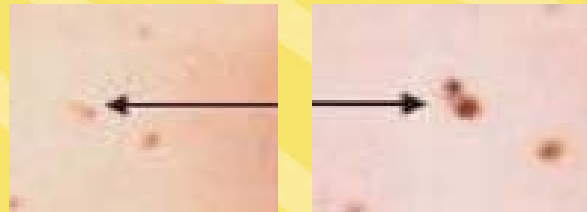
A – Asymmetry



D – Diameter



B – Border



E - Evolving



C – Color



# Why is preventing skin cancer so important?

- Half of adults aged 18-29 reported being sunburned at least once in 2011.
- One-third of US teens aged 14-17 had a sunburn in 2011.
- One blistering sunburn in early childhood can double a person's chances of developing melanoma later in life.
- The majority of melanomas are caused by exposure to UV rays.
- The risk of melanoma increases by 75% when tanning bed use is started before age 35.
- One person dies of melanoma every hour.



# Indoor Tanning

- Chances of melanoma increases by 75% when indoor tanning begins before age 35.
- Can also cause premature skin aging (wrinkles, lax skin, spots and more).
- It is no safer than tanning in the sun.





# How can we minimize UV exposure and prevent sun damage to our children and ourselves?

- Shade
- Clothing
- Hats
- Sunglasses
- Sunscreen
- No Indoor Tanning



# School Administrators and Board Members

- Recognize the importance of sun safety
- Adopt, communicate and enforce simple sun safety policies
- Conduct sun safety in-service training and programs
- Enhance the school's physical environment



# Principals and School Nurses

- Promote sun safety awareness
- Ask parents to provide hats and sunscreen
- Encourage students and staff to wear protective clothing
- Recognize staff and students who practice sun safety
- Work with others in your community
- Make sure that the school health committee addresses health issues such as sun safety



# Parents and Guardians

- Urge your school's parent-teacher association to advocate for sun safety policies
- Develop partnerships to help support environmental improvements
- Participate on your school's health team
- Be a good role model by practicing sun safety
- Encourage your children to make sun safety a habit
- Make sure your children wear hats, cover-up clothing and sunglasses



# Teachers and Coaches

- Include sun safety
- Integrate sun-safe lessons into the full range of academic subject areas
- Teach students about UV protection
- Remind students to practice sun-safe behaviors
- Serve as a sun safety role model
- Make sun safety behaviors routine
- Choose locations with shade for outdoor activities



# Questions?

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