



Mark Parkinson, Governor
Roderick L. Bremby, Secretary

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
AND ENVIRONMENT

www.kdheks.gov

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May is Melanoma/Skin Cancer Detection and Prevention Month

One in five Americans will develop skin cancer in their lifetime. More than one million new cases of skin cancer will be diagnosed in the United States this year, including more than 100,000 cases of melanoma. Melanoma is the most dangerous form of skin cancer, especially among young people. One American dies of melanoma almost every hour. In Kansas, as many as 12,000 new cases of skin cancer are diagnosed each year, including more than 550 cases of melanoma. Nearly 100 deaths in Kansas are due to the disease annually.

“The best way to prevent skin cancer is to protect yourself from the sun,” said Roderick Bremby, Secretary of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE). “Up to 90 percent of melanomas are caused by exposure to ultraviolet light or sunlight and could be prevented if children, adolescents and adults were protected from ultraviolet radiation.”

People with the following risk factors are more likely to develop skin cancer:

- lighter, natural skin color
- family or personal history of skin cancer
- exposure to the sun through work and play
- history of sunburns early in life
- skin that burns, freckles, reddens easily or becomes painful in the sun
- blue or green eyes
- blond or red hair
- certain types of moles/or a large number of moles.

“The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends several easy options for sun protection,” said Dr. Jason Eberhart-Phillips, State Health Officer and Director of Health for KDHE. “While you enjoy the outdoors this summer, use sunscreen, seek shade, and wear sunglasses, a hat and sun-protective clothing. When used consistently, sun-protective practices can reduce a person’s risk of developing skin cancer.”

This year, the National Council on Skin Cancer Prevention has declared Friday, May 28 as Don’t Fry Day. This is the start of Memorial Day weekend when many people traditionally begin spending more time outdoors. This campaign seeks to advance awareness of skin cancer prevention. More information and resources about this campaign are available at www.skincancerprevention.org.

For Kansas cancer information and resources, visit www.cancerkansas.org.

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As the state's environmental protection and public health agency, KDHE promotes responsible choices to protect the health and environment for all Kansans. Through education, direct services and the assessment of data and trends, coupled with policy development and enforcement, KDHE will improve health and quality of life. We prevent illness, injuries and foster a safe and sustainable environment for the people of Kansas.