

Health Awareness

A County Health Pool Publication



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What you should know about skin cancer



According to the National Cancer Institute, approximately one million people in the United States are diagnosed with skin cancer each year. In fact, about 40-50% of Americans who live to be 65 will get some form of skin cancer during their lives. The good news is that skin cancer is almost 100% curable if found early and treated promptly.

About 90 percent of all skin cancers are basal cell carcinomas, a slow-growing form of skin cancer that rarely spreads to other parts of the body. Another common skin cancer is squamous cell carcinoma which spreads slightly more frequently than basal cell carcinoma.

Melanoma, which occurs in the skin's pigment cells, is the most serious form of skin cancer. Each year, more than 50,000 people are diagnosed with melanoma. Melanoma can spread (metastasize) to nearby lymph nodes and then to other parts of the body such as the liver, brain or lungs. Metastatic melanoma can be fatal.

Who is at risk for skin cancer?

Although anyone can get skin cancer, the following risk factors increase your odds of developing it:

- Fair skin—Skin cancer occurs more frequently in people with light colored skin, blonde or red hair, and blue or green eyes.
- Ultraviolet radiation—People who live in areas with increased UV radiation (like Colorado) or who spend a lot of time in the sun have an increased risk for skin cancer.
- A large number of moles—People with 50 or more moles or certain abnormal-looking moles have an increased risk for melanoma.
- Personal or family history of skin cancer—People who have had skin cancer and people with close relatives who have had melanoma are at increased risk for melanoma.

What should I look for?

The most common warning sign of skin cancer is a change on the skin, especially a new growth or a sore that doesn't heal. The first sign of melanoma is often a change in the

color, size or feel of an existing mole. Melanomas may have an asymmetrical shape, an irregular border, uneven color, and/or a diameter greater than a pencil eraser (1/4 inch). Skin cancers vary greatly. If you have a question or concern about something on your skin, contact your doctor.

How can I protect myself?

The best way to prevent skin cancer is to reduce your exposure to UV radiation. You should:

- Avoid the midday sun (from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m).
- Wear long sleeves, pants and a brimmed hat when you go outside.
- Use a broad spectrum sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or more.
- Wear sunglasses with UV-absorbing lenses to protect your eyes and the skin around your eyes.

For more information

For more information on skin cancer, go to the National Cancer Institute's website at <http://cancer.gov> or call 1-800-4-CANCER.

Keep your barbecue safe and healthy



Summer is the season for outdoor grilling. To keep food safe and healthy, backyard chefs should take care to avoid food poisoning. Here are some simple tips to reduce the growth of bacteria that can lead to food poisoning:

Clean hands and surfaces often.

One of the best ways to fight bacteria is to wash your hands, counter tops, cutting boards, and knives frequently. Use soap and warm water.

Thaw meats in the fridge. Thaw frozen meats and poultry in the refrigerator—not on the counter—

so that bacteria doesn't get the opportunity to grow.

Marinate meats in the fridge.

Always marinate meats in the refrigerator to minimize bacterial growth. If you want to use the marinade for a dip or basting sauce, reserve some before you put it on the meat. Never reuse marinade that was used on raw meat.

Don't reuse plates or utensils that have touched raw meat. Don't put cooked meat back on the plate you used to carry the raw meat outside. Wash utensils used on the raw meat so that you don't contaminate cooked meat.

Don't cross contaminate. Keep all fruits and vegetables separate from raw meat, so that they are not contaminated by meat juices. Use separate cutting boards: one for fruits and vegetables and another for meats or poultry.

Cook meats thoroughly. Use a clean thermometer to test meat and poultry for doneness (see chart at right). Fish should be cooked until it is opaque and flakes easily. Shrimp and lobster are done when the shell turns red and the flesh is opaque.

Serve foods hot. Serve food immediately after grilling, so hot foods won't have enough time to grow bacteria. Perishable foods should not be left out for more than two hours.

Refrigerate leftovers promptly.

Divide larger quantities into smaller portions so that they cool more quickly, giving bacteria less opportunity to grow.

By following these easy tips, you can relax and enjoy your barbecue.

Safe temperatures for cooked foods

To kill harmful bacteria, food should be cooked to the proper internal temperature. Use the following chart to test for doneness:

Raw Food	Internal Temp.
Ground products:	
Beef, veal/lamb or pork	160°F
Chicken or turkey	165°F
Beef, veal or lamb roasts and steaks:	
<i>Medium rare</i>	145°F
<i>Medium</i>	160°F
<i>Well done</i>	170°F
Pork chops, roasts and ribs:	
<i>Medium</i>	160°F
<i>Well done</i>	170°F
Ham (fresh)	160°F
Sausage (fresh)	160°F
Chicken, whole & cut up	180°F
Turkey (unstuffed)	
<i>Whole</i>	180°F
<i>Breast</i>	170°F
<i>Dark meat</i>	180°F
Eggs, in casseroles, sauces and custards	160°F



CHP welcomes Montezuma County

The County Health Pool sends a hearty welcome to Montezuma County, the newest member of the County Health Pool.