

facts about: *Skin Cancer*

# MARYLAND

## survivor story: *Rachel Peterson*



At age 17, I noticed a spot on my right leg that had turned from brown to black and immediately saw a doctor. Soon after, my mom received a phone call with the test results and told me

I had Stage I melanoma. I was very upset and worried that my life was going to end at such a young age or change in a major way. Skin cancer runs in my family; my grandfather died from Stage IV melanoma.

I underwent surgery to remove the mole and three inches of the surrounding area. I have since had multiple surgeries to remove potential pre-cancerous lesions. Luckily, I have been cancer-free for four years!

My melanoma experience has increased my awareness about skin cancer. I used to go to the tanning bed up to five days per week and sunburned frequently as a child and teen. Since my diagnosis, I no longer use tanning beds and take measures to prevent overexposure to the sun, such as wearing sunscreen (SPF 30) when I am outside.

*Rachel Peterson, a resident of Adelphi, Maryland, works with Maryland's Congress to change tanning bed regulations.*

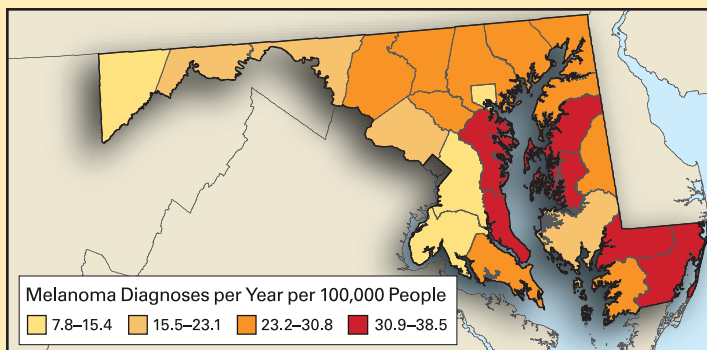
**Skin cancer is the most common cancer diagnosed in the United States.**<sup>1-5</sup> This fact sheet presents statistics about skin cancer for Maryland and the United States.

## just the facts: *Skin Cancer in Maryland*

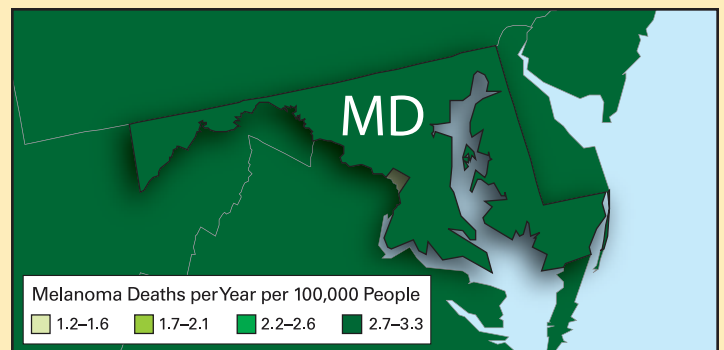
- **Sunburns.** A survey conducted in 2004 found that 44% of White adults in Maryland had experienced at least one sunburn in the past year.<sup>6</sup> Sunburns are a significant risk factor for the development of skin cancer.<sup>4,7-10</sup>
- **New Cases of Melanoma.** An estimated 1,530 residents of Maryland will be diagnosed with melanoma in 2013.<sup>3</sup> Melanoma is responsible for about 75% of all deaths from skin cancer.<sup>3,11</sup>
  - Maryland has the 7<sup>th</sup> highest rate of new melanoma diagnoses nationwide among White residents, who are at the highest risk for melanoma.<sup>12</sup>
  - Calvert County has the highest rate of new melanoma diagnoses in Maryland—double the national average.<sup>12</sup>
- **Deaths from Melanoma.** About 159 people in Maryland die of melanoma every year.<sup>13</sup>
  - Melanoma is one of just four cancers in Maryland with a rising death rate. Among state residents over the age of 65, melanoma has the fastest rising cancer death rate.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>1-41</sup> All references can be found on the SunWise Web site at: [www.epa.gov/sunwise/statefacts.html](http://www.epa.gov/sunwise/statefacts.html)

**Annual Rate of New Melanoma Diagnoses, 2005–2009<sup>12</sup>**  
All Races, Both Sexes, All Ages



**Melanoma Death Rates, 2005–2009<sup>13</sup>**  
All Races, Both Sexes, All Ages



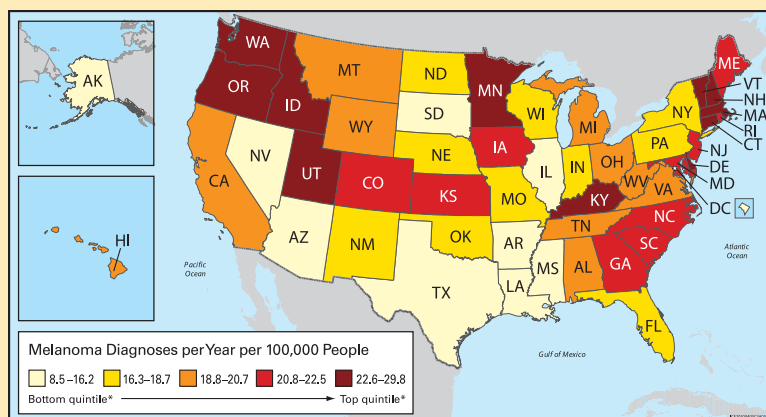
## The Cost of Skin Cancer

*In the United States, medical costs to treat melanoma skin cancer in 2010 were estimated at almost \$2.4 billion. These costs are projected to reach at least \$3.2 billion by 2020.<sup>14</sup>*

### statistics: *Cause for Concern*

- **More than 3.5 million cases of skin cancer are diagnosed each year,<sup>2</sup> making it the most common of all cancers in the United States.<sup>1,3-5</sup> More people will be diagnosed with skin cancer in 2013 than the number diagnosed with breast, prostate, lung, and colon cancers combined.<sup>3</sup> Without a reduction in skin cancer incidence rates, about 1 in 5 non-Hispanic Whites will get skin cancer in their lifetime.<sup>15</sup>**
- **One American dies of melanoma every hour.<sup>3</sup>**
- **Melanoma is the most commonly diagnosed cancer and the second leading cause of cancer death for young adults 25–29 years old.<sup>16</sup>**
- **For people born in 2009, 1 in 50 will be diagnosed with melanoma<sup>16</sup>—nearly 30 times the rate for people born in the 1930s.<sup>17</sup>**

**National Annual Rate of New Melanoma Diagnoses, 2005–2009<sup>12</sup>**  
All Races, Both Sexes, All Ages, Age-adjusted Rates



\* Please note that delays in reporting melanoma cases to cancer registries are more common since they are usually diagnosed and treated in non-hospital settings such as physician offices. States are grouped into quintiles based on rates of melanoma diagnoses. A quintile is a statistical “block” representing 20% of a total. Because data are available for 50 states and D.C., four quintiles include ten states, and one quintile includes eleven. For example, the eleven states with the highest melanoma rates—22.6 to 29.8 diagnoses per 100,000 residents every year—are in the top quintile.

### what works: *An Ounce of Prevention*

- **Unprotected exposure to ultraviolet light—a known human carcinogen—is the most preventable risk factor for skin cancer.<sup>7,18-23</sup> Taking simple steps as early in life as possible can reduce one’s risk.<sup>3-5,24,25</sup>**
- **Early detection of melanoma can save one’s life.<sup>26-32</sup> Skin examinations may be the best way to detect skin cancer early.<sup>3,33-37</sup>**
- **The CDC found evidence that education and policy approaches in primary schools (for children) and in recreational or tourism settings (for adults) can improve sun safety behaviors.<sup>38,39</sup>**
- **Student self-reported data<sup>40</sup>—collected as part of the U.S. EPA’s SunWise Program—showed that teachers using the SunWise Tool Kit for 1-2 hours yearly can spur increases in students’ sun safety knowledge and attitudes and small to modest improvements in short-term sun safety behaviors.<sup>41</sup>**
  - Using the data mentioned above, published modeling results show SunWise teaching between 1999 and 2015 could prevent more than 50 premature deaths and 11,000 future cases of skin cancer, saving the country more than \$30 million in medical costs and productivity losses.<sup>41</sup>

### skin cancer prevention: *Action Steps*

- **Do Not Burn.** Overexposure to the sun is the most preventable risk factor for skin cancer.
- **Avoid Sun Tanning and Tanning Beds.** UV light from tanning beds and the sun causes skin cancer and wrinkling.
- **Use Sunscreen.** Generously apply a broad spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher. Reapply at least every two hours, and after swimming or sweating.
- **Cover Up.** Wear protective clothing, such as a long-sleeved shirt, pants, a wide-brimmed hat, and sunglasses with 99–100% UVA/UVB protection, when possible.
- **Seek Shade.** Seek shade when the sun’s UV rays are most intense between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- **Watch for the UV Index.** Pay attention to the UV Index when planning outdoor activities to prevent overexposure to the sun.

<sup>1-41</sup> All references can be found on the SunWise Web site at: [www.epa.gov/sunwise/statefacts.html](http://www.epa.gov/sunwise/statefacts.html)