

facts about: *Skin Cancer*

MONTANA

survivor story:
Nancy Gavin Mills

I noticed the black, pink and scaly spot on my ear a while before visiting a clinic. I wasn't too concerned since my father's non-melanoma

cancers were treated easily. After the clinic treatment failed, I waited a year before having it biopsied. I was scared, but not surprised, when diagnosed with Stage II melanoma, which later advanced to Stage IV. I had 10 months of chemotherapy, a major surgery to biopsy a tumor between my lungs, and part of my ear and 34 lymph nodes removed. I'll never be 'cured', but I've been cancer-free for 5 years—a rarity among advanced stage melanoma patients!

I felt invincible growing up. Though everyone needs protection from the sun's rays, I learned I was at high risk as a freckled redhead with a family history of skin cancer. Now I avoid peak sun hours and wear a hat, sunglasses, and high SPF sunscreen, making sure to reapply every two hours. I also share my story with others and encourage them to be sun safe and vigilant about skin changes.

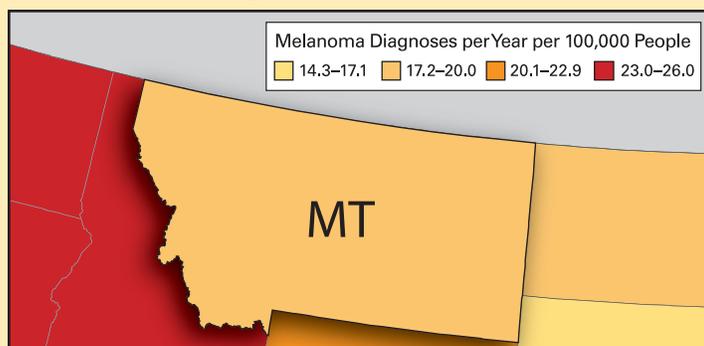
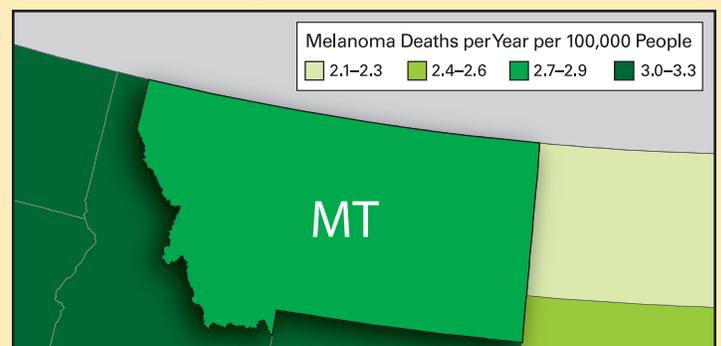
Nancy Gavin Mills, a resident of Missoula, MT, was 38 when diagnosed with melanoma.

Skin cancer is the most common cancer diagnosed in the United States.¹⁻⁵ This fact sheet presents statistics about skin cancer for Montana and the United States.

just the facts: *Skin Cancer in Montana*

- **Sunburns.** A survey conducted in 2004 found that more than 40% of White adults in Montana had experienced at least one sunburn in the past year.⁶ Sunburns are a significant risk factor for the development of skin cancer.^{4, 7-10}
- **New Cases of Melanoma.** An estimated 250 residents of Montana will be diagnosed with melanoma in 2013.³ Melanoma is responsible for about 75% of all deaths from skin cancer.^{3,11}
 - The rate of new melanoma diagnoses is growing nearly seven times faster in Montana than in the United States, increasing at a rate of more than 3% per year from 2005 to 2009.¹²
- **Deaths from Melanoma.** About 31 people died of melanoma in Montana every year from 2005 to 2009.¹³
 - Montana's death rate from melanoma was the 24th highest nationwide from 2005 to 2009.¹³

1-41 All references can be found on the SunWise Web site at: www.epa.gov/sunwise/statefacts.html

Annual Rate of New Melanoma Diagnoses, 2005–2009¹²
All Races, Both Sexes, All Ages**Melanoma Death Rates, 2005–2009¹³**
All Races, Both Sexes, All Ages

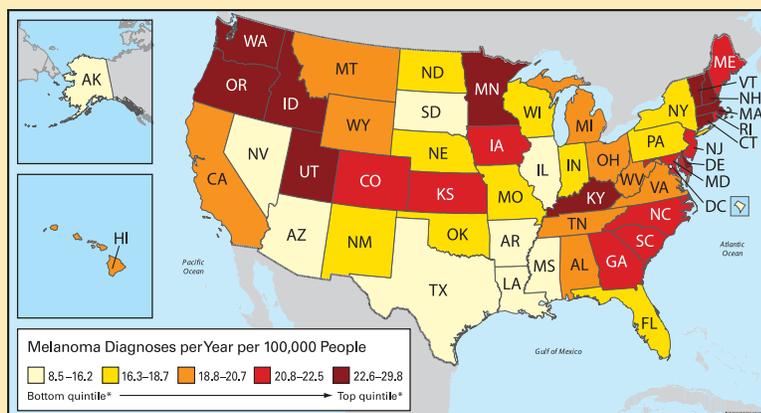
The Cost of Skin Cancer

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 2020.¹⁴

statistics: *Cause for Concern*

- **More than 3.5 million cases of skin cancer are diagnosed each year,² making it the most common of all cancers in the United States.^{1,3-5} More people will be diagnosed with skin cancer in 2013 than the number diagnosed with breast, prostate, lung, and colon cancers combined.³ Without a reduction in skin cancer incidence rates, about 1 in 5 non-Hispanic Whites will get skin cancer in their lifetime.¹⁵**
- **One American dies of melanoma every hour.³**
- **Melanoma is the most commonly diagnosed cancer and the second leading cause of cancer death for young adults 25–29 years old.¹⁶**
- **For people born in 2009, 1 in 50 will be diagnosed with melanoma¹⁶—nearly 30 times the rate for people born in the 1930s.¹⁷**

National Annual Rate of New Melanoma Diagnoses, 2005–2009¹²
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.^{7,18-23} Taking simple steps as early in life as possible can reduce one’s risk.^{3-5,24,25}**
- **Early detection of melanoma can save one’s life.²⁶⁻³² Skin examinations may be the best way to detect skin cancer early.^{3,33-37}**
- **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.^{38,39}**
- **Student self-reported data⁴⁰—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.⁴¹**
 - 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.⁴¹

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.

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