

facts about: Skin Cancer



DELAWARE

Skin cancer is the most common cancer diagnosed in the United States.¹⁻⁴ This fact sheet presents statistics about skin cancer for Delaware and the United States as a whole.

just the facts: Skin Cancer in Delaware

- **Sunburns.** A 2004 survey found that 41.4% of white adults in Delaware had at least one sunburn in the past year.⁵ Sunburns are a significant risk factor for the development of skin cancer.⁶⁻⁸
- **New Cases of Melanoma.** The rate of new melanoma diagnoses—responsible for 75% of all skin cancer deaths—was 23% higher in Delaware than the national average from 2002-2006 and was the 9th highest in the U.S.^{9,10} An estimated 220 state residents were diagnosed with melanoma in 2009.²
 - Sussex County has the highest rate of new melanoma diagnoses in the state and ranks among the highest 19% of counties nationwide.⁹
- **Deaths from Melanoma.** About 26 people in Delaware die of melanoma every year.¹¹ Delaware had the 14th highest melanoma death rate nationally from 2002-2006—10% higher than the U.S. average.¹²
 - Kent County has the highest melanoma death rate in the state, 33% higher than the national average.¹¹

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

survivor story: Anna Marie Farro



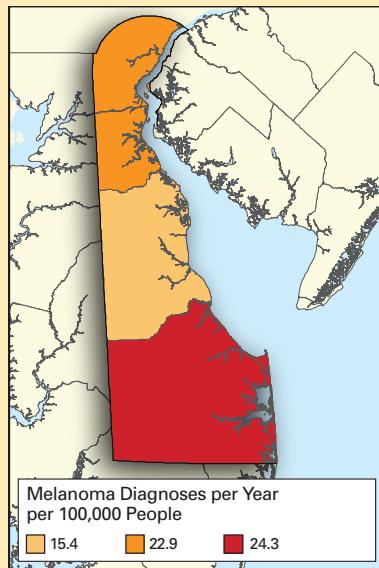
In May 2006, I noticed a skin change on my upper left arm. The area was pink and round with no irregular borders; it looked sort of like a pimple, so I thought it was nothing. When I went to the doctor a few months later, though, my dermatologist decided to biopsy the spot. Shortly afterward, I received a life-changing phone call: I had melanoma.

I couldn't believe I had cancer. At the time, I didn't know much about melanoma, but I could tell it was serious. I had a first major surgery to remove the melanoma, and then, after a biopsy found the cancer had spread to three of my sentinel lymph nodes, I had another surgery to remove all of my lymph nodes. I have been "cancer-free" for almost 2 years.

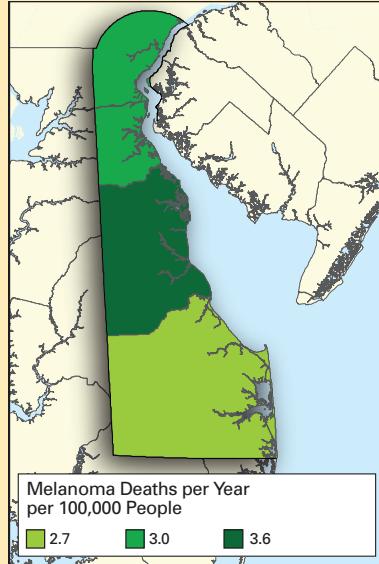
Growing up, I spent a lot of time in the sun without sunscreen. Since my diagnosis, I wear sunscreen daily and ask my family to do the same. I also volunteer to speak about sun safety to anyone who will listen. Educate yourself about melanoma and protect your skin from the sun—you can help prevent skin cancer!

Anna Marie Farro is the co-founder of Miles for Melanoma of Delaware and lives in Middletown, DE.

Annual Rate of New Melanoma Diagnoses, 2002–2006⁹
All Races, Both Sexes, All Ages



Melanoma Death Rates, 2002–2006¹¹
All Races, Both Sexes, All Ages



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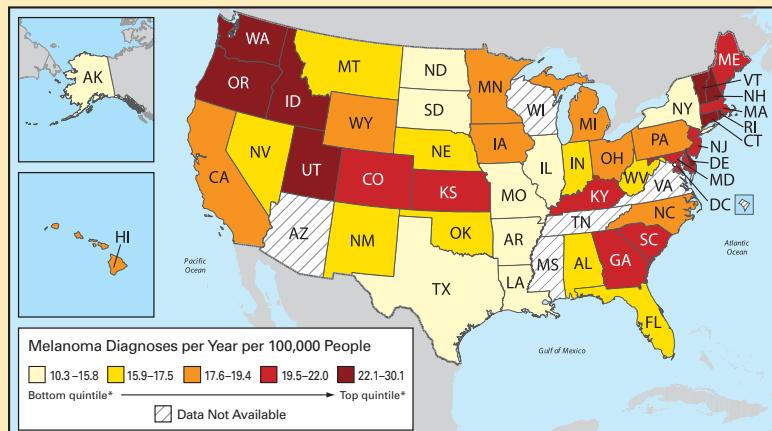
The Cost of Skin Cancer

In the U.S., medical costs to treat skin cancer are estimated at almost \$2 billion annually.¹³⁻¹⁴

statistics: Cause for Concern

- In 2009, more than 1 million people were diagnosed with skin cancer, making it the most common of all cancers.¹⁻⁴ More people were diagnosed with skin cancer in 2009 than with breast, prostate, lung, and colon cancer combined.² About 1 in 5 Americans will develop skin cancer during their lifetime.¹⁵
- One American dies of melanoma almost every hour.²
- Melanoma is the second most common form of cancer for adolescents and young adults (15-29 years old).¹⁶
- For people born in 2006, 1 in 53 will be diagnosed with melanoma¹²—nearly 30 times the rate for people born in 1930.¹⁷

National Annual Rate of New Melanoma Diagnoses, 2002–2006¹⁸
All Races, Both Sexes, All Ages, Age-adjusted Rates



what works: An Ounce of Prevention

- Unprotected exposure to ultraviolet light—a known human carcinogen—is the most preventable risk factor for skin cancer.^{6,15,19-23} Taking simple steps as early in life as possible can reduce one's risk.^{2,4,24,25}
- Early detection of melanoma can save one's life.²⁶⁻³² Skin examinations may be the best way to detect skin cancer early.^{2,33-37}
- 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 15 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.

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