

UV Safety and Skin Cancer



Every year nearly 60,000 people worldwide die from skin cancers caused by too much sun, according to a new study from the World Health Organization (WHO).

The first-ever estimate of the global health burden caused by the sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation shows about 48,000 deaths each year are caused by malignant melanoma ; another 12,000 deaths are caused by other types of skin cancer.



"We all need some sun, but too much sun can be dangerous -- and even deadly," says Maria Neira, MD, director for public health and the environment at the WHO, in a news release. "Fortunately, diseases from UV such as malignant melanomas, other skin cancers, and cataracts are almost entirely preventable through simple protective measures."

Melanoma is less common than other types of skin cancer , but it is the most serious. However, melanoma and other skin cancers may be cured if they are caught and treated early before the cancer cells spread.



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Prevention Key to Avoiding Skin Cancer

Ultraviolet radiation does have some beneficial effects, such as producing vitamin D.

But too much exposure to ultraviolet radiation from the sun's rays increases the risk of skin cancer as well as other conditions, including sunburn, aging of the skin, and cataracts.

Officials say following a few simple preventive measures could prevent much of the cancer and other death and disease caused by UV radiation. The preventive measures include:

- Limit time in the midday sun, when UV rays are most intense.
- Wear protective clothing, including hats and sunglasses.
- Use a broad-spectrum sunscreen of sun protection factor (SPF) 15+.
- Avoid sunlamps and tanning parlors.
- Protect children from the sun

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