

# PARENTS!

## Protect Your Children and Yourselves From Too Much Sunlight

It's a fact! Childhood sunburns and tanning can increase your child's risk for developing skin cancer as an adult. Sunburns and tanning are actually outward signs of internal skin damage. Too much sun can cause skin cancer even if a person does not tan or experience a sunburn.

Skin cancer is an epidemic and the most common cancer in California. Melanoma, the most dangerous form of skin cancer, kills about eight thousand Americans every year!

Anyone, regardless of skin color, can get skin cancer. Individuals at higher risk often have one or more of these characteristics:

- Lighter colored skin, hair, or eyes
- Tendency to burn rather than tan
- History of severe sunburns
- Many moles or some irregular moles
- Personal or family history of skin cancer



# Stay Sun Safe

There are three major types of skin cancer. Skin cancer may develop within a mole or otherwise appear as a growth, pearly bump, open sore, or patch on the skin. If you spot a suspicious lesion or notice that a growth changes in either size, color, or shape, make an appointment quickly with a dermatologist or other medical professional.

Following are eight strategies to decrease you or your child's contact with harmful UV rays:

- Reduce sun exposure from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Wear a hat with a wide brim or side/neck flaps
- Wear longer clothing, weather permitting
- Apply sunscreen (SPF 15) to exposed skin
- Wear UV-protective sunglasses
- Use lip balm (SPF 15)
- Stay under shade when outdoors
- Avoid tanning salons

For additional information, contact the California Department of Health Services, Skin Cancer Prevention Program (SCPP) at (916) 449-5393 or by E-mail at [amanthe@dhs.ca.gov](mailto:amanthe@dhs.ca.gov). You are encouraged to visit SCPP's webpage [www.dhs.ca.gov/cpns/skin/index.htm](http://www.dhs.ca.gov/cpns/skin/index.htm).

