

facts about: *Skin Cancer*

VIRGINIA

survivor story: *Chelsea Price*



When I was 23, I noticed a scabby, oozing mole on my back. I didn't delay in seeing a dermatologist, who diagnosed me with stage III melanoma.

The cancer had spread to multiple lymph nodes on both sides of my body, so they were removed in addition to the excision of the melanoma and surrounding tissue. Two years later, I had a new primary melanoma removed. I continue to follow up with my oncologist every three months.

I grew up on the beach and started using tanning beds regularly at age 14. Now I will never step foot in a tanning bed again! Ever! While I still enjoy the sun, I respect that it can be harmful. I seek shade; wear a big, floppy hat and sunglasses; and lather up daily with broad spectrum sunscreen, reapplying every two hours. I am very vocal about my adventures with melanoma through my blog, sharing everything from surgery pictures, to my midnight fears, to the latest research article. Early detection is key, so I encourage people to schedule yearly skin exams with a dermatologist.

Due to the advanced stage of my melanoma, I face a lifelong battle. Trust me, my tan wasn't worth it.

Chelsea Price is a resident of Roanoke, Virginia.

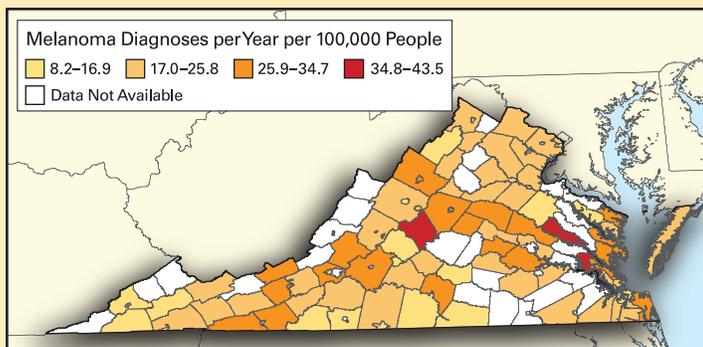
Skin cancer is the most common cancer diagnosed in the United States.¹⁻⁵ This fact sheet presents statistics about skin cancer for Virginia and the United States.

just the facts: *Skin Cancer in Virginia*

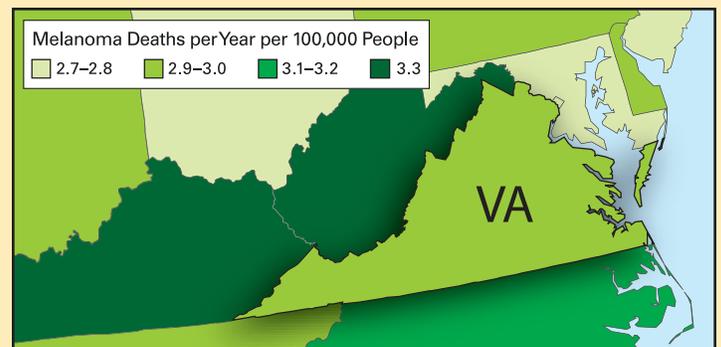
- **Sunburns.** A survey conducted in 2007 found that a third of Virginia adults reported having had a sunburn in the past year.⁶ Sunburns are a significant risk factor for the development of skin cancer.^{4,7-10}
- **New Cases of Melanoma.** An estimated 2,380 residents of Virginia are expected to be diagnosed with melanoma in 2013.³ Melanoma accounts for less than 5% of all skin cancer cases but the vast majority of skin cancer deaths.^{3,11}
 - James City County had the highest rate of new melanoma diagnoses in the state and in the nation from 2005–2009; its rate was 127% above the national average.¹²
- **Deaths from Melanoma.** About 231 people died of melanoma in Virginia every year from 2005 to 2009.¹³
 - The annual death rate from melanoma rose by an average of 2% per year among male residents over the age of 50 from 1975 to 2009.¹³
 - From 2005 to 2009, the death rate from melanoma rose more rapidly in Virginia than that from any other cancer except liver and bile duct cancer.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



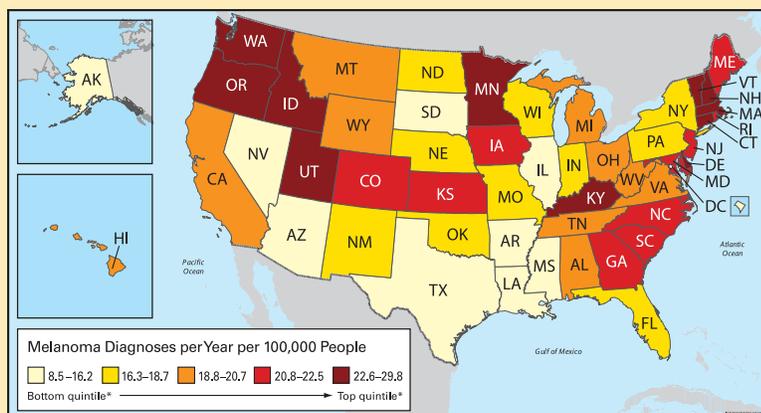
The Cost of Skin Cancer

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.

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