

YOUR SKIN PROTECTS YOU

Return the Favor!

Did you know that our skin is the human body's largest organ? It's tough, protecting us from heat and cold and keeping our internal organs safe. Our skin also keeps out bacteria and other germs, yet it's delicate and needs to be taken care of. Daily moisturizing, proper hydration, and a healthy lifestyle can help keep our skin clear and glowing. Exposing it to too much sun – in nature or in a tanning bed – can not only burn our skin, but do damage that can be long-term, and even fatal. This applies to everyone at any age, no matter how dark or light your skin may be.

May is Skin Cancer Detection and Prevention Month. It's a great time to learn how to keep your skin healthy as well as how to recognize signs of cancer. Types of skin cancer range from actinic keratosis, which is precancerous, to basal cell carcinoma, squamous cell carcinoma, and, the deadliest form, melanoma.



SEEK SHADE

Between the hours of 10 AM and 4 PM, stay in the shade as much as possible.



PROTECTIVE CLOTHING

Wear appropriate clothing to help protect your skin, including a hat and sunglasses.



APPLY SUNSCREEN

Use sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher. Ideally, you should always wear sunscreen when outdoors, even if you don't plan to be in the sun. Don't forget: you can get a sunburn while driving your car! If you're going in the water or sweating a lot, be sure to re-apply regularly.



DO NOT BURN

Avoid getting a sunburn! Many Baby Boomers are now realizing the extent of the harm they did to their skin in their youth.



NO BASE TANS

Getting a "base tan" is not a good idea! It does not protect you from further damage.



NO TANNING BEDS

Tanning beds are a big no-no! Getting an even, all-over tan means you have exposed all of your skin to harmful rays.

In addition to taking steps to prevent skin cancer, be sure to regularly check your body for any new or unusual spots, freckles, or moles. This means looking between your fingers and toes, too! Once exposed to the sun, your skin has been placed at risk, often in areas you wouldn't normally think about.

If you find anything that looks suspicious, see a dermatologist right away. When spotted early, skin cancer is highly treatable. Your skin protects you. Return the favor!

