July 2014

Wellness Quick Read

From The Solutions Group Wellness Team

ABCDE's of Skin Cancer

If any of your moles/spots exhibit the following, consider it a red flag and consult your dermatologist.

A—Asymmetry
One half is unlike the other.

B—Border
Any undefined, scalloped, or irregular border.

C—Color
If color varies throughout mole. Contains shades of tan, brown, or black and even white, red, or blue.

D—Diameter
Anything larger than 6mm (the diameter of a pencil eraser).

E—Evolving
Lesions that stand out from others or that change in size, shape, or color.

If caught early, skin cancer is often easily treated. Self examine your skin regularly and have any abnormalities checked by a dermatologist.

Is It Worth the Risk?

Bathing suit season is here! Aside from hitting the gym, the next step for many is that *"base tan"* to prepare for their summer adventures. However, whether you are tanning indoors or outdoors, there is no such thing as a "safe" tan.

Any change in color to your skin is the result of damage to your cells. Indoor tanning equipment emits both UVA and UVB radiation that is just as strong as the sun, if not stronger. Studies have found up to a 60% increase in melanoma (the most deadly form of skin cancer) in individuals who have been exposed to indoor tanning. And, the risk increases with each exposure. Those who begin tanning prior to age 35 have nearly a 75% increased risk of melanoma.

Not only should skin cancer be a concern, but UV radiation can also lead to premature aging, skin spots, eye damage, and immune suppression.

According to a new JAMA Dermatology study, "Worldwide, there are more skin cancer cases due to indoor tanning than there are lung cancer cases due to smoking." In addition, the FDA has proposed moving tanning equipment from a Class I device to a Class II, moderate risk device. The FDA has also issued a strong recommendation restricting minors from using indoor tanning. Many states have followed suit by enacting laws to prevent minors from indoor tanning without parental consent.

UV radiation is a known carcinogen. If you wear your seat-belt to minimize injury risks, and do not smoke to avoid cancer risks, why are you still putting your health at risk by tanning?

Sunscreen 101

With all of the current marketing schemes, how do you choose the right sunscreen ? No sunscreen can protect your skin from 100% of the UV radiation. There are two types of UV radiation that harm our skin, therefore it is important to choose a sunscreen labeled ***broad-spectrum*** to protect against both UVA and UVB rays.

SPF stands for Sun Protection Factor. SPF 15 filters about 93% of UV rays, while SPF 30 filters 97% and PF 50 filters 98%. These extra percentages can make a big difference so choose at least SPF 15 and possibly higher if you are at increased risk for burning.

No sunscreen, regardless of SPF, is effective for longer than 2 hours. Therefore, whatever sunscreen you choose, be sure to reapply liberally (about 1 oz. per application for full SPF protection) at least every 2 hours when you spend time outdoors.

For extra reassurance, choose sunscreen with The Skin Cancer Foundation's Seal of Recommendation.

The Solutions Group

A division of Presbyterian Healthcare Services

Recipe of the Month: Summer Gazpacho

Serves 8

Ingredients

3 tomatoes, quartered
1 bell pepper , any color, seeded and quartered
1 small cucumber, cut into large pieces
1/2 red onion, coarsely chopped
2 garlic cloves, smashed
1/2 jalapeno
2 Tbsp fresh basil, chopped
1 Tbsp fresh oregano, chopped
4 cups (32 oz.) low-sodium tomato or vegetable juice
2 Tbsp red wine vinegar
1/4 tsp black pepper
1 avocado, sliced
1/4 cup crumbled feta cheese

Directions:

Add tomatoes, bell pepper, cucumber, onion, garlic, jalapeno, basil, and oregano to a blender or food processor. Pulse until coarsely chopped, not pureed. Move mixture to large bowl. Add vinegar, pepper, and tomato or vegetable juice. Mix well. Cover and refrigerate. Chill for at least 2 hours or overnight to help develop flavors. When ready to serve, pour individual servings and top with avocado and feta.

Per 1.5 cup serving: *Calories: 100; Calories from fat: 45; Total fat: 5g; Saturated fat: 1.5g; Trans fat: 0g; Cholesterol: 5mg; Sodium: 150mg; Total carbohydrate: 13g; Dietary fiber: 4g; Sugars: 7g; Protein: 3g*

Recipe Source: *Roberta L. Duyff, MS, RDN, FAND, CFCS*
Click here for this recipe: http://www.eatright.org/Public/content.aspx?id=6442480429

Vitamin D and the Sun

In recent years, the media has highlighted the growing vitamin D deficiency in Americans. Vitamin D is a fat soluble vitamin that is best known for helping calcium absorption. However, it is utilized throughout the body for various other functions as well, such as immune health and disease prevention.

While the recommended daily amount of vitamin D has been debated over the years, the bottom line is that most people just aren't getting enough.

So, how do we get vitamin D? Our bodies can actually make vitamin D when ultraviolet light directly interacts with the skin. Most people meet some of their vitamin D needs this way. However, with the recent surge in skin cancer diagnoses, experts now warn against unprotected exposure to the sun's UV rays.

Some medical experts suggest just 5-10 minutes of unprotected sun exposure a couple times a week to ensure adequate vitamin D. However, the Skin Cancer Foundation and most dermatologists argue against this recommendation, stating, "all unprotected UV exposure contributes to cumulative skin damage, accelerating aging, and increasing our lifetime risk of skin cancer."

Those advocating for sun protection may have the strongest argument, stating that there are "noncarcinogenic" alternatives to obtaining adequate vitamin D through diet.

Vitamin D naturally occurs in very few foods. Oily fish provides many nutrients including vitamin D; reach for tuna and salmon at least twice a week. Due to the limited variety of natural sources, many common foods have been fortified with vitamin D. Most milks and dairy products, along with orange juice, contain added vitamin D. Even cereals and breads are now being fortified. To be sure you are consuming adequate amounts of Vitamin D read the Nutrition Facts panel of these commonly fortified foods. If you still aren't getting enough (and many Americans are not) consult with your dietitian or physician about incorporating a vitamin D supplement into your diet.