



With summer upon us, taking simple precautions to avoid too much sun exposure is important for people of all ages and skin colors. [Skin cancer](#) is the most common type of cancer and 1 in 5 Americans will develop skin cancer by age 70. The main types of skin cancer are squamous cell carcinoma, basal cell carcinoma, and melanoma. Melanoma is less common than the other types of cancer but is more likely to spread to other parts of the body. Most skin cancer deaths are caused by melanoma, and cases have risen by more than 50 percent over the past decade.

Most skin cancers are thought to be caused by overexposure to [ultra-violet](#) (UV) radiation from the sun or from tanning beds and sun lamps. However, other factors also increase the risk for skin cancer, including the following:

- Having fair skin that freckles and burns easily
- Blue, green, or other light-colored eyes
- Red or blonde hair
- Past treatment with radiation
- A weakened immune system
- Having a history of blistering sunburns, especially as a child or teen
- Having several large or many small moles
- A family history of skin cancer, particularly melanoma

Some research has shown that using broad-spectrum [sunscreens](#) can reduce the risk of melanoma. Experts advise using at least 2 tablespoons of sunscreen (the equivalent of a shot glass) with a SPF of 30 or higher, avoiding the peak hours of sunlight, and wearing protective clothing and sunglasses when outdoors.

Prevention and Screening

[Skin cancer screening](#) consists of a visual examination, and like other screening tests, there are risks such as false-

negative or false-positive results, and unnecessary biopsies.

However, people who are concerned about getting skin cancer or who notice changes to their skin, such as changes in the appearance of moles, or a family history of melanoma or other risk factors should talk to their doctor about screening.



If you, or someone you know, is interested in primary care, addiction recovery services, or mental health care for children or adults, contact InterCommunity. To receive services at any of our Hartford or East Hartford locations, please call 860-569-5900.



InterCommunity

Health Care for the Whole Person

40
*Years of
Caring*

 Like us on Facebook