

CDA to Partner on Project to Provide Outdoor Workers with Better Sun Protection

Ottawa, June 7, 2016 – The Canadian Dermatology Association (CDA) is joining the Occupational Cancer Research Centre (OCRC) in the effort to develop a nationally-applicable, effective and sustainable sun safety program for workers in Canada.

The partnership, being announced as part of this year’s Sun Awareness Week (June 6 to 12), underscores the importance of providing protection to outdoor workers who cannot always follow the number one rule of sun safety – getting out of direct sunlight during peak hours.

“People have long accepted hardhats and work boots as essential safety equipment on construction sites, and we need this same sort of protection for workers who spend long periods outdoors in the sun,” said Dr. Jennifer Beecker, National Spokesperson for the CDA’s Sun Awareness Program.

According to the OCRC, approximately 1.5 million Canadians are exposed to sun at work. The largest industrial groups exposed to sun in Canada are construction, farming, building care and maintenance. Outdoor workers have a 2.5 to 3.5 times greater risk of skin cancer than indoor workers – and as many as 7,000 skin cancers were attributed to occupational exposure to the sun in 2014.

The OCRC’s Sun Safety at Work Canada program will help workplaces to embed sun safety into their occupational health and safety management system to protect their workers. Sun Safety at Work Canada is developing a comprehensive range of resources to support workplaces to become more sun safe. Full information is available at <http://www.occupationalcancer.ca/2016/sunsafetyatwork/>

“Sun protection practices on the job for outdoor workers should be as automatic as wearing a hard hat and work boots for construction workers,” said Dr. Beecker.

While the number of new cases of skin cancer continues to rise, it is one type of cancer that can be prevented by taking simple precautions:

Protect your skin

- When the UV Index is 3 or higher, protect your skin as much as possible. In general, the UV Index in Canada can be 3 or higher from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. between April and September, even if it’s cloudy.
 - Seek shade or bring your own (e.g., an umbrella).
 - Wear clothing and a wide-brimmed hat that cover as much skin as possible, as appropriate to the activity and weather.
 - Use sunscreen labelled “broad spectrum” and “water-resistant” with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 30, on skin not covered by clothing. Apply sunscreen generously and reapply when required.
- Don’t use UV tanning equipment or deliberately try to get a suntan, and avoid getting a sunburn.

Protect your eyes

- Wear sunglasses or prescription eyeglasses with UV-protective lenses.
- Wear a wide-brimmed hat for added eye protection.

Sun Awareness Week

The Canadian Dermatology Association has organized the nation-wide early summer Sun Awareness Week since 1989. The aim is to educate Canadians about the dangers of too much sun and to help stop the rising incidence of skin cancer in Canada. This year's Sun Awareness Week is Monday, June 6 to Sunday, June 12, and involves a number of events and activities across Canada, including free skin cancer screenings, community events, and school visits by dermatologists.

About the CDA

The Canadian Dermatology Association, founded in 1925, represents Canadian dermatologists. The association provides easy access to the largest, most reliable source of medical knowledge on dermatology. CDA exists to advance the science and art of medicine and surgery related to the care of the skin, hair and nails; provide continuing professional development for its members; support and advance patient care; provide public education on sun protection and other aspects of skin health; and promote a lifetime of healthier skin, hair and nails. By doing so, CDA informs and empowers both medical professionals and the Canadian public. To learn more about what the work CDA does visit <http://www.dermatology.ca> or join the conversation on <http://www.Twitter.com/CdnDermatology> or www.Facebook.com/CdnDermatology.

For further information please contact:

Nimmi Sidhu, Coordinator, Communications

Office: (613) 738-1748 ext. 228

nsidhu@dermatology.ca