

## **Sun Awareness Week Launches with Important Message about Tanning Beds**

Ottawa, June 9, 2016 – The Canadian Dermatology Association (CDA) today launched Sun Awareness Week, June 6 to 12, with a message to students getting ready for prom: forget the tanning bed and hit the spa instead.

The message is delivered in a 30-second cartoon in which two girls preparing for prom debate the merits of heading to the tanning salon with friends.

“Isn’t that like going to the cancer store and asking for a double melanoma,” says one of the two characters featured in the video.

The video is timed for release as teens are in full prom mode, and is particularly important as Sunbed use before the age of 35 increases the risk of melanoma by 35 per cent.

“Unfortunately, in this technological age, the sun is not the only way to get skin cancer,” said Dr. Jennifer Beecker, National Spokesperson for the CDA’s Sun Awareness Program. “We’ve actually gone ahead and invented machines that expose people to the same kind of danger as the sun, and which, unfortunately, are very popular with teens getting ready for prom.”

The video is available on the CDA website and people and organizations concerned about the rising toll skin cancer takes on Canadians are being encouraged to help spread the message through social media, rebroadcasting and word of mouth.

Sun Awareness Week takes place every spring as a way of raising awareness of the need to enjoy the sun responsibly. Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the world, and it was estimated that in 2015 there would be 85,100 new cases diagnosed in Canada alone, including 6,800 cases of melanoma, the most serious form of skin cancer. It was estimated that 1,150 Canadians would die from melanoma in 2015.

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](http://www.Facebook.com/CdnDermatology).

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