

2016 Skin Cancer Fact Sheet

- Skin cancer remains the most common cancer diagnosed in Canada—more than the number of breast, prostate, lung, and colon cancers **combined**. Basal cell carcinoma and squamous cell carcinoma are the two most common forms of skin cancer.¹
- Of the non-melanoma skin cancers, basal cell carcinomas (BCC) are diagnosed anywhere from twice to four times as much (2:1-4:1) as squamous cell carcinomas (SCC).²
- In 2015, there were an estimated 78,300 cases of non-melanoma skin cancers (NMSC), of which, 44,400 were men and 34,000 were women.³
- **80-90%** of skin cancers are caused by exposure to ultraviolet radiation (UVR).¹ The radiation can come from tanning beds, sun lamps, or regular exposure to sunlight—all are risk factors for damaging cells in the body.
- The best way to minimize the risk of developing skin cancer is through a) limiting exposure to sunlight during peak hours (11-3 o'clock), b) using a broad-spectrum sunscreen with SPF 30 or higher, c) covering exposed skin, as well as wearing sunglasses with lenses that filter out 99-100% of UV light and block light from entering at the sides, and d) seeking shade when possible.³
- Canadians who were born in the 1990s are **two to three times more likely** to develop skin cancer in their lifetime (one in six) than Canadians born in the 1960s, who have a one in twenty chance of developing it.¹
- Accordingly, 8% of new cancers diagnosed in adolescents and young adults (15-29) will be melanoma. In the same age group, 4% of cancer deaths will be from melanoma.⁴
- Canadians who use tanning beds before the age of 30 are 75% more likely to develop a form of skin cancer than those who do not.¹
- The five-year relative survival rate for basal cell carcinoma (BCC) is 100%. That means five years after diagnosis, **Canadians with these non-melanoma skin cancers are just as likely to be alive as the average population**. For squamous cell carcinoma (SCC), it is 95%.⁴
- Men have a 1.7% chance of developing melanoma in their lifetime; women have a 1.3% chance. Men have a 0.4% chance of dying of melanoma in their lifetime, and women, a 0.2% chance.⁴
- Although melanoma comprises 3% of all new cancer diagnoses, because of its high survivability, it represents 5% of ten-year prevalent cancer cases.⁴

Please visit www.dermatology.ca for more information on the prevention and early detection of skin cancer.

¹ *Canadian Skin Cancer Foundation*. <http://www.canadianskincancerfoundation.com/about-skin-cancer.html>

² Abbas, Mariam, and Kalia, Sunil. *Trends in Non-Melanoma Skin Cancers in Canada*. *Journal of Cutaneous Medicine and Surgery*, Vol. 20, No. 2, pp. 166-175.

³ *Canadian Dermatology Association*. <http://www.dermatology.ca> | <http://www.dermatologue.ca>

⁴ Canadian Cancer Statistics 2016.