

United

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HOSPITAL

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Safer summer sun: Preventing skin cancer

THE LAZY DAYS of summer are just around the corner. As you prepare for summer fun, don't neglect your skin. Too much sun can cause skin cancer.

"Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the world," says Charles E. Crutchfield III, MD, medical director of Crutchfield Dermatology in Eagan, Minn. "About half of all cancers diagnosed this year will be skin cancer."

You can take steps to reduce your risk of skin cancer.

WHAT IS SKIN CANCER?

The outer layer of the skin, or epidermis, is composed of many different cells, including basal and squamous cells and melanocytes, or melanin-producing cells. Melanin is a pigment that colors skin, hair and the iris of the eye, and provides some protection from ultraviolet radiation.

The majority of skin cancers develop in these cells. Each year, more than 1 million people will be diagnosed with basal cell cancers. In addition, about 250,000 people will be diagnosed with squamous cell cancer and 55,100 with melanoma.

All three forms of cancer are highly treatable and, when found early, survivable.

Melanoma, however, is a more serious cancer. Although it is found in only about 4 percent of all skin cancer cases, it accounts for 79 percent of all skin cancer deaths. The American Cancer Society estimates that 7,910 people die from melanoma each year.

WHAT CAUSES SKIN CANCER?

The No. 1 cause of skin cancer is sun exposure. According to Crutchfield, basal and squamous cell cancers are associated with long-term, chronic sun exposure.

"You typically find these types of cancer in people who have outdoor jobs, such as lifeguards, park rangers or roofers," says Crutchfield. "Melanoma, on the other hand, is associated with extreme sun exposure. The risk of melanoma increases if you have ever suffered two or more blistering sunburns."

Other risk factors are:

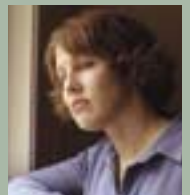
- Family or personal history of skin cancer.
- Fair skin, freckling and light hair.
- Being a man. Men have higher rates of skin cancer than women.
- Smoking.

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UPDATE



TOBACCO-FREE CAMPUS

TOBACCO-FREE CAMPUS, JULY 1

Beginning July 1, all Allina Hospitals & Clinics, including United Hospital, will be tobacco-free. This means smoking is not allowed on United property, including buildings, grounds and parking areas. This step is being taken to provide the best quality environment for our patients and our employees.

We understand that having to be in the hospital or having a relative or friend in the hospital undergoing a medical procedure can be a stressful experience. To help you through this time, we have relaxing waiting areas available where you can rest, read or use the Internet to stay in touch with friends and relatives. Patients who find it difficult to be tobacco-free can talk to their doctors about a nicotine patch. ❖



UNITED WINS NATIONAL AWARD

United Hospital earned the 2004 Distinguished Hospital Award for Clinical Excellence™ from HealthGrades, Inc.®, ranking United among the top 5 percent of all hospitals in the nation for overall clinical performance.

HealthGrades has also recognized United for earning five stars—the highest score possible—for treatment of heart attacks, heart failure and atrial fibrillation (rapid heart beat). United is one of the top 10 hospitals in Minnesota for overall heart services. United also received five stars for treatment of stroke and community-acquired pneumonia.

HealthGrades is a national organization dedicated to improving the quality of health care. Each year, they look at more than 5,000 hospitals nationwide and publish ratings based on how well the hospital performs. Hospitals are rated with stars, five stars (best), three stars (average) and one star (poor). HealthGrades recognizes the top 20 percent of all hospitals (164) that achieve the highest overall ratings with the Distinguished Hospital Award. ❖



NEW MRI SCANNER DROPS IN

Wrapped in a big gift bow, a new, more precise and powerful MRI scanner was lowered by crane through the roof of United Hospital into the Medical Imaging Department on Jan. 10.

The Signa® EXCITE™ 3.0T System, although more compact than current models, would not fit through the doors or hallways of United Hospital. The solution was to cut a hole in the roof and lower it in.

The new MRI unit supports the John Nasseff Neuroscience Institute at United Hospital and will be used in brain, spine, body and orthopedic imaging. ❖

Understanding miscarriage

CARLA BREWER was devastated when her seemingly normal pregnancy ended in miscarriage at 13 weeks. She worried that it was somehow her fault and feared that she might never have a healthy baby.

What she learned, though, is that as many as 20 percent of diagnosed pregnancies end in miscarriage and that most of these are not preventable. And much to her relief, her doctor told her that most women who miscarry can have healthy pregnancies later.

Miscarriage is the loss of a baby before 20 weeks of pregnancy. More than half of those that occur in the first 13 weeks are caused by genetic problems of the fetus, although often the cause is not known. What is known, however, is that the normal routines of daily life, such as working, exercising or having sex, do not increase the risk of miscarriage.

While most miscarriages cannot be prevented, there are steps a woman can take to protect her pregnancy:

- Get early prenatal care.
- Eat a healthful diet.
- Stay away from alcohol, tobacco and other harmful substances.
- Take a daily multivitamin that contains 400 micrograms of folic acid.

When Brewer became pregnant

again five months later, she was excited but anxious. Much to her joy and relief, this pregnancy produced a perfect baby girl, who was joined by a sister two years later.

WHEN YOU LOSE A BABY

There are few things more painful than losing a baby. Each person deals with grief differently. If you or a loved one has lost a baby, it's important to know that it is normal to feel a wide range of emotions.

Annette Klein, RN, parent educator at The Birth Center of United Hospital, works with patients who have lost a baby, assisting them in the hospital and helping them access follow-up support, counseling and other services as needed.

While hospitals and caregivers have become more sensitive and better prepared to help patients coping with a loss, Klein encourages patients to ask for the resources and support they need. "Patients should be offered the opportunity to grieve and be supported at this very difficult time."

Allina Hospitals & Clinics and Children's Hospitals and Clinics have developed a resource guide for people who have experienced



pregnancy or infant loss, or who have learned that their baby may die soon after birth.

The booklet, "When You Lose a Baby: Support, Resources and Remembrance," provides information about a wide range of services that may be beneficial to families who have experienced a loss, including support groups, genetic counseling, perinatal hospice and remembrance programs. To request a copy, call Medformation at 651-697-3333.

PREGNANCY AND INFANT LOSS SUPPORT GROUP

The Pregnancy and Infant Loss Support Group meets the second and fourth Mondays of each month. Meetings are in the Garden View Medical Building at 347 N. Smith Ave., in St. Paul. Registration is required, and you can register through Medformation at 651-697-3333. ♦

TO REQUEST A FREE COPY OF THE BOOKLET, "WHEN YOU LOSE A BABY: SUPPORT, RESOURCES AND REMEMBRANCE," CALL MEDFORMATION AT 651-697-3333.



Safer summer sun: preventing skin cancer

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■ Presence of dark, irregular-shaped moles.

The warning signs of skin cancer are any change in the appearance of a mole or any bleeding spots that don't heal within three weeks. If you notice either of these signs, see your dermatologist.

AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION

Skin cancer is easily preventable. Take these precautions:

- Cover up (see "Beyond Sunscreen" at right).
- Use sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or greater and ultraviolet A protection. Be sure to apply the sunscreen at least one-half hour before sun exposure and reapply often.
- Seek shade.
- Wear sunglasses.
- Don't use tanning beds or sun lamps.
- Identify moles, check them regularly for changes in appearance or have them removed.

"Remember that 80 percent of a person's lifetime sun exposure occurs before age 21," says

Crutchfield. "Thus, it's very important to keep children safe. You should start applying sunscreen at age 6 months and continue throughout life."

Crutchfield also recommends a complete skin exam at age 20,

with continued exams at a frequency recommended by your dermatologist.

For more information about sun protection and skin cancer, visit: www.crutchfielddermatology.com or www.medformation.com. ♦

Beyond sunscreen: Clothing counts, too

Charles E. Crutchfield III, MD, a board-certified dermatologist, says that the No. 1 fundamental protection against sun exposure is clothing.

"Sun-protective clothing offers you protection from the start, and you don't have to remember to reapply it," says Crutchfield.

He recommends sun-protective clothing that has:

- Tightly woven fabrics made from fibers that absorb or reflect ultraviolet (UV) light. Unbleached cotton or silks are good examples. If you aren't sure about a garment, hold it up to the light. If you can see light through it, then the UV rays can penetrate it.
- Sun protection factor (SPF) to block harmful rays. Look for an SPF of at least 15.
- Darker colors may offer more protection than lighter colors.
- Hats with wide brims to shade the face, ears and back of the neck.
- Loose-fitting, long-sleeved shirts and long pants or skirts.



Charles E.
Crutchfield III, MD

Catching melanoma early

While sunning herself on a beach in Mexico last spring, Carrie McCann noticed an unusual spot on her stomach. In the warm Mexican sun, the fleshy pink-colored spot would darken and itch slightly. Although she wasn't overly concerned, the 24-year-old registered nurse thought she should have it checked out when she returned to St. Louis Park, Minn., from her vacation.

"I had just met someone who had melanoma, and as I have a lot of moles that should be checked out, I decided to visit a dermatologist," says McCann.

Melanoma is a type of skin cancer that occurs in the melanocytes. These epidermal cells produce melanin, a pigment that colors the skin and iris of the eyes. Melanoma is the most serious and most deadly form of skin cancer. According to the American Cancer Society (ACS) about 55,100 people will be diagnosed with melanoma in 2004, and about 7,910 people will die from it.

McCann's spot didn't look like melanoma, which usually appears as a dark black, irregular-shaped mole. McCann also has no family history of melanoma. But she does have very fair skin and many moles, both of which are associated with an increased risk of melanoma.

A biopsy revealed that McCann did have melanoma.

"I was lucky," says McCann. "My diagnosis was malignant melanoma in situ." In situ is Latin for "in place." In this case, the cancer was confined to the epidermis, or the top layer of skin. Cancer in situ offers the best chance for a full recovery. The ACS reports that the five-year survival rate for patients with malignant melanoma in situ is 97 percent.

McCann returned to the dermatologist, who surgically removed her tumor and some surrounding tissue. She continues to visit her dermatologist every three months for full body scans and a physical examination. At these visits, the doctor also removes and biopsies any suspicious moles. "At every exam, so far, the

dermatologist has found some precancerous cells in the biopsied tissue," says McCann.

McCann has made some changes in her life to help reduce the risk of a recurrence. "I definitely make sure to wear at least a [sun protection factor] SPF 15 sunscreen and reapply it frequently when out in the sun," says McCann. "I also wear a sun hat and fuller-coverage clothing, but I haven't yet tried any of the sun-protective clothing."

Her visits to the dermatologist inspired another change. McCann left the obstetrics and

gynecology office where she worked and has become a full-time dermatology nurse at Crutchfield Dermatology in Eagan, Minn.



Carrie McCann has made changes in her life to reduce the risk of a recurrence.

Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer, but it is easily preventable. You can take steps to reduce your risk.





United HOSPITAL

CANCER

Brain Tumor Support Group*

Meets the second Monday of every month, 7-8:30 p.m.

The Breast Cancer Support Group*

Meets the first Tuesday of every month, 1-3 p.m.

Lung Cancer Support Group

Free support group designed to address the needs of people with lung cancer and their families. For more information, call 651-241-6858.

Prostate Cancer Support Group*

Meets the fourth Tuesday of every month, 7-8:30 p.m.

Reach to Recovery*

One-to-one visiting and support program for women with breast cancer.

**Programs co-sponsored with the American Cancer Society.*

HEART

Heartsaver/CPR Class

Meets monthly.

United Hearts Club

Support and education for cardiac patients and their families.

Women's Heart Disease Prevention Center

A heart disease prevention program to help women learn about their personal risk. For more information, call 651-241-KNOW (5669).

HEALTH IMPROVEMENT

BOSU Balance Trainer

BOSU integrated balance training improves strength, stability and flexibility while enhancing coordination and balance. Call the Milton M. Hurwitz ExerCare Fitness Center at 651-241-8080 for more information.

Pilates

Pilates exercises are designed to strengthen the core by developing pelvic stability and abdominal control. Call the Milton M. Hurwitz ExerCare Fitness Center at 651-241-8080 for more information.

T'ai Chi Chih

Meditation in motion that reduces stress, energizes the body and promotes health by balancing life's vital energy. Call the Milton M. Hurwitz ExerCare Fitness Center at 651-241-8080 for more information.

PREGNANCY, BIRTH AND PARENTING

All About Babies

Teaches expectant parents, grandparents or adoptive parents how to care for a newborn.

Birth and Parenting Preparation

Six evenings or one weekend session. Prepares expectant parents for birth and early parenting.

Breastfeeding Preparation

One-session class. Introduces parents to the basics of breastfeeding and provides resources for ongoing support.

Breastfeeding and Work

One-session class for women who are planning to return to work and continue to breastfeed.

Changing Shapes™: Pregnancy Fitness and Mother and Baby Fitness

Ongoing fitness groups meet twice a week.

Expectant Father

One-session class for fathers-to-be.

Expectant Grandparents

Learn about changes in prenatal care, labor and birth, and parenting. Focuses on the unique role of grandparents.

Expecting Multiples

A six-session birth preparation class for parents expecting more than one baby.

Father and Baby

Three-session class for fathers and their newborns.

Healthy Pregnancy

Two evenings or one Saturday class. Provides information about the development of babies and how to make pregnancy easier and more fulfilling.

Infant and Child CPR

Two-hour class to learn resuscitation methods for infants and children younger than 8.

First Steps Program

Trained volunteer mentors provide hospital visits, referrals to community resources, education tips, emotional support and social gatherings for young parents. For more information, call 651-241-6883.

To register or for more information, call Medformation at 651-697-3333 or visit www.medformation.com.



Infant Massage

Three-session class that helps new parents learn massage techniques.

New Brother/New Sister

One-session class designed to help children older than 3 understand what it's like to have a new brother or sister.

New Parent Connection

Offers education and support for parents and babies up to 4 months. Co-sponsored by Early Childhood Family Education and the St. Paul Public Schools.

Planning Your Pregnancy

One-session class discusses issues to consider prior to conception.

Postpartum Depression Support Group

Meets Wednesdays, 1:30-3 p.m., at the Twin Lakes Medical Center in Roseville.

Pregnancy After a Loss

A birth preparation class for expectant parents who have experienced the loss of a previous baby. A support group is also available.

Pregnancy and Infant Loss Support Group

For parents who have experienced miscarriage, stillbirth or infant death. Meets twice a month.

Refresher Birth and Parenting Preparation

Three evenings or one Saturday session. For those who have given birth within the last five years. Fee includes New Brother/New Sister class.

Small Talk

Sign language for parents to communicate effectively with their hearing infants and toddlers, ages 9 months to 3 years.

Teen Pregnancy

Pregnancy information and birth preparation for the pregnant teen and her support person. Meets every Wednesday.

Toddler Massage

Two-session class designed for parents and their toddlers who are 14 months to 3½ years old.

Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteers serve patients and staff and greet visitors at United. Call 651-241-8644 or visit www.unitedhospital.com for an application form.

If you do not find the program or class you're looking for in this listing, call Medformation at 651-697-3333 for information about offerings at other Allina hospitals, or visit www.medformation.com.

COMING EVENT

SENIOR SEMINAR ON EYE HEALTH

Join us for a free seminar on:

Part 1: "Update on Glaucoma Treatment," by Richard M. Launer, MD

Part 2: "Advanced Macular Degeneration Treatment," by George E. Miller, MD

Part 3: "State-of-the-Art Treatment for Cataracts," by John C. Foley, MD

Date: Thursday, May 13, 1-3 p.m.

Place: Heart & Lung Center Conference Hall, United Hospital Campus, 255 N. Smith Ave., St. Paul

Seats are limited, so call and reserve yours today at 651-645-3997 or 1-800-TLC-EYES.

Parking is available in the Heart Hospital Ramp, which is connected to the Heart & Lung Center by a tunnel on the lower level. Parking will be validated, so bring your parking stub with you. Signs will direct you to the Conference Hall on the lower level.

This free program is sponsored by Progressive EYE-CARE, in cooperation with Richard M. Launer, MD, George E. Miller, MD, and John C. Foley, MD.



Race for the Cure benefits Breast Center

FOR THE past 11 years, The Breast Center of United Hospital has reaped the benefits of the Twin Cities Race for the Cure®, the largest race in Minnesota. Sponsored by the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, the race raises funds to help “eradicate breast cancer as a life-threatening disease by advancing research, education, screening and treatment.”

Most of the net proceeds from the race stay right here in Minnesota. Last year, more than \$1.5 million was distributed to help fund national research and statewide breast cancer

screening, education and treatment programs targeting underserved Minnesota women. For instance, in 2003, United Hospital received a \$200,000 Komen grant to help purchase a new digital mammography unit. The new unit has several advantages over conventional mammography, including clearer, more precise images. Digital mam-

mammography is faster because the image appears on a computer, which reduces patient wait time and anxiety. In addition, images are stored electronically, allowing radiologists to

compare current and past images more quickly. ♦

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE BREAST CENTER OF UNITED HOSPITAL, CALL 651-241-8300.

HOW TO REACH US

Emergency Department 651-241-8755
 General/Patient Information 651-241-8000
 Medformation 651-697-3333

For hospital information and services, visit www.unitedhospital.com.

12th Annual Race for the Cure

Come and join in the 12th Annual Race for the Cure this Mother's Day, May 9. For more information about the Race for the Cure, visit www.racecure.org.

Date: Mother's Day, Sunday, May 9

Time: 7:30 a.m.

Location: Southdale Center, 69th Street and York Avenue, Edina, Minn.

Register online at www.racecure.org by May 1, by mail or in person at Southdale Center Garden Court, May 7 to 9. You can also register at Southdale starting at 6 a.m. on race day.

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