Melanoma of the Skin in Ohio
What do I Need to Know?

Comprehensive Cancer Control Program
Division of Prevention & Health Promotion
Bureau of Healthy Ohio

May 2012

What is melanoma of the skin?

Melanoma is the most serious type of cancer of the skin.

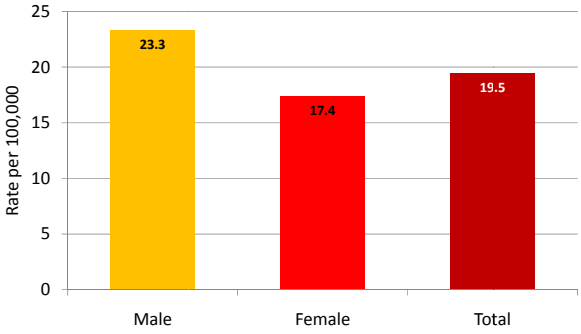
The chance of developing melanoma of the skin increases with age, but this cancer does affect people of all ages. While melanoma of the skin can occur on any skin surface, in men melanoma of the skin is often found on the head, neck or between the shoulders and hips, while in women it often develops on the lower legs or between the shoulders and hips. Melanoma of the skin is rare in African American people and others with dark skin.

How does melanoma of the skin affect the U.S. and Ohio populations?

- Melanoma of the skin is the sixth-most common cancer in both men and women in Ohio.
- During 2005-2009, an average of 2,411 new cases of melanoma skin cancer were diagnosed each year among Ohio residents.
- Approximately 70 percent of melanoma skin cancers occur in individuals 50 and older.

e 1

Average Annual Melanoma of the Skin Incidence Rates by Gender in Ohio, 2005-2009[1,2]



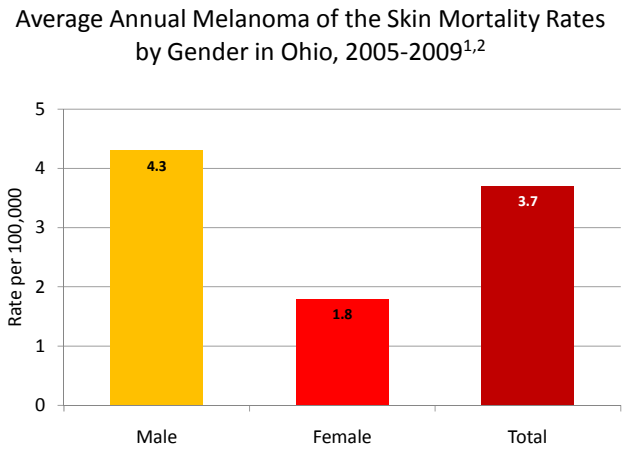
[1] Source: Ohio Cancer Incidence Surveillance System, Ohio Department of Health, 2012.
[2] Average annual rate per 100,000, age-adjusted to the 2000 US standard population.

- Currently, a white man living in the United States has a 1 in 36 lifetime risk, while a white woman has a 1 in 55 lifetime risk of developing invasive melanoma of the skin.

- Males in Ohio are more likely to develop melanoma of the skin than females (Figure 1).

- Males in Ohio had a higher rate of death from melanoma of the skin compared to females (figure 2).

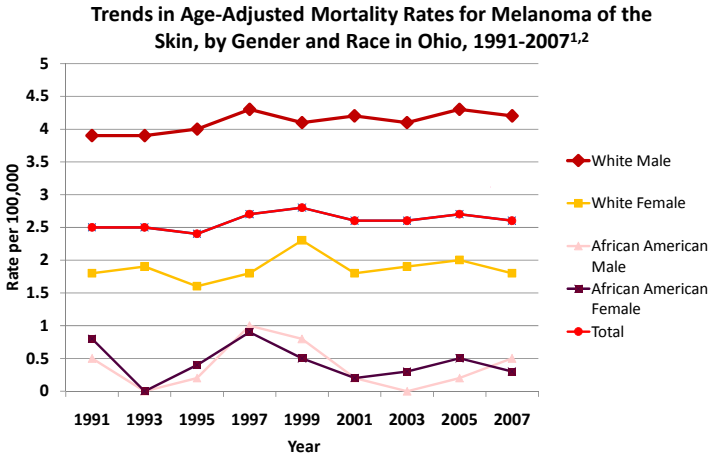
Figure 2



[1] Source: Ohio Cancer Incidence Surveillance System, Ohio Department of Health, 2012.
[2] Average annual rate per 100,000, age-adjusted to the 2000 US standard population.

- Melanoma skin cancer deaths account for 1.9 percent of all deaths from cancer in Ohio.

Figure 3



[1]Source: Ohio Cancer Incidence Surveillance System, Ohio Department of Health, 2010.
[2]Average annual rate per 100,000, age-adjusted to the 2000 US standard population.

- Mortality from melanoma of the skin increased 3.7 percent among whites from 1991 to 2007. (Figure 3)

- The African American melanoma of the skin mortality rate was 85.7 percent lower than the rate for whites in 2007. (Figure 3)

What causes melanoma of the skin and who is at risk?
The exact cause of most melanoma skin cancer is not yet known. Your risk is considered higher than average if:

- You are white or have fair skin that burns or freckles easily
- You have blue or green eyes
- You have blond or red hair
- You have a personal history of skin cancer
- You have a family history of skin cancer
- You have a weakened immune system
- You have a history of sunburns early in life
- You have a history of spending a lot of time in the sun or using sunlamps or tanning booths
- You have a large number of moles that are a type of mole called Dysplastic nevi

Are there symptoms of melanoma of the skin?
One of the first signs of melanoma is a change in the size, shape, color or feel of an existing mole. Most melanomas have a black or blue-black area.

Remembering "ABCD" can help you remember what to watch for:

The "ABCD" of Melanoma of the Skin

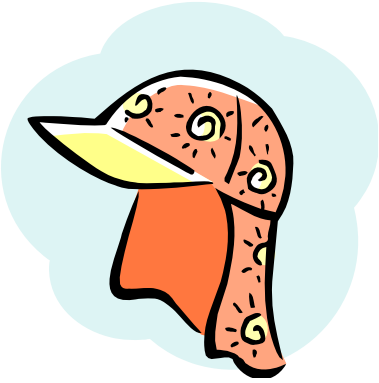
- ***Asymmetry – The shape of one half of the mole does not match the other***
- ***Border – The edges of the mole are ragged, notched, blurred or irregular in outline. Pigment may spread to the surrounding skin.***
- ***Color – Color of the mole is uneven. Shades of black, brown and tan may be present. Areas of white, grey, red, pink or blue also may be seen.***
- ***Diameter – There is a change in size of the mole, usually an increase. Melanomas are usually larger than a pencil eraser (6mm). In recent years more melanomas are being diagnosed between 3-6mm.***

Melanomas can vary greatly in appearance. Many show all of the "ABCD" features, but others show changes in only one or two of the areas. If you have a question or concern about something on your skin, see your doctor.

Early cancer usually does not cause pain. It is important not to wait to feel pain before seeing a doctor.

Are there things I can do to help prevent melanoma of the skin?
Reducing your exposure to the sun (UV Radiation) can help reduce the risk of melanoma of the skin. Here's how:

- Avoid exposure to the midday sun whenever possible (from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.)
- If you are outside, wear long sleeves, long pants and a wide-brimmed hat
- Protect yourself from sun that can penetrate light clothing, windshields and windows
- Protect yourself from sun reflected by sand, water, snow and ice
- Wear sunglasses that have UV-absorbing lenses. Look for sunglasses that wrap around and block as close to 100% of UVA & UVB rays as possible.
- Protect your skin by using a lotion, cream or gel that contains sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher



Is there a way to find melanoma of the skin or precancerous skin conditions early?

In addition to the "ABCD" self-examination of your moles, you should talk to your doctor skin check-ups. Your doctor's advice will be based on your personal and family history, medical history and risk factors.

A skin examination is often part of a routine checkup by a health care provider. If necessary, you may be referred to a dermatologist (skin doctor) for further examination.

What are the diagnostic tests for melanoma of the skin?

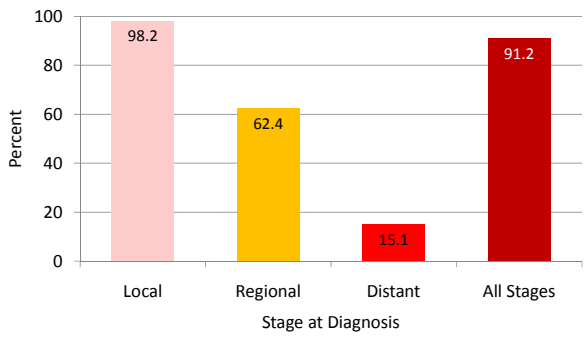
If a doctor suspects a spot on the skin may be melanoma, a biopsy of the skin will need to be performed. This type of biopsy can usually be done in your doctor's office with a local anesthesia. Your doctor will remove or take a sample of the skin growth. The sample will then be checked for any cancer cells.

Does the stage of diagnosis make a difference?

Screening tests by a health care professional can result in the detection of melanoma of the skin at earlier stages, when treatment is more likely to be successful.

Figure 5

U.S. Five-year Relative Survival Probability for Melanoma of the Skin and Stage of Diagnosis, 2002-2008[1,2]



[1] Source: Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results (SEER) Program, *SEER Cancer Statistics Review 1975-2009*, National Cancer Institute, 2012.
[2] SEER 18 areas. Based on follow-up of patients into 2009.

- When melanoma of the skin is found early (at the local stage) the five-year survival likelihood is 98.2 percent (Figure 5).

Stage of Diagnosis

Local – A malignant tumor confined entirely to the organ of origin.

Regional – A malignant tumor that has extended beyond the organ of origin directly into surrounding organs or tissues or into regional lymph nodes.

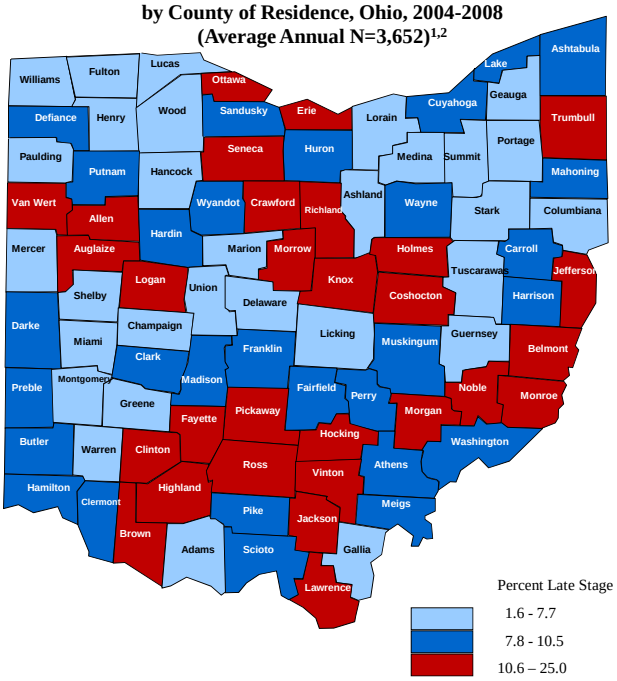
Distant – A malignant tumor that has spread to other parts of the body (distant organs, tissues and/or lymph nodes) remote from the primary tumor.

Unstaged/Unknown – Insufficient information is available to determine the stage or extent of the disease at diagnosis.

Figure 6

Healthy Ohio

Melanoma of the Skin: Proportion of Cases (%) Diagnosed Late (Regional or Distant) Stage by County of Residence, Ohio, 2004-2008 (Average Annual N=3,652)[1,2]



[1] Source: Ohio Cancer Incidence Surveillance System, Ohio Department of Health, 2011.
[2] Each category represents approximately 33%, or 29, of the 88 Ohio counties.

- Over eight percent of all melanoma skin cancers in Ohio are diagnosed at the regional or distant stage, when survival is not as high. Figure 6 presents the percentage of regional and distant stage melanoma of the skin by Ohio county.

Is skin cancer screening covered by insurance?

Many insurance companies cover skin cancer screenings as part of a routine checkup. Check with your health insurance provider to determine your skin cancer screening benefits.

For more information about Medicare's coverage related to skin cancer screening, call the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services at 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) or visit the Medicare Web site at http://www.medicare.gov/health. TYY users should call 1-877-486-2048.

If I am without health insurance and live in Ohio, is there a way to obtain skin cancer screening?

Many providers know the importance of screening and will work with you to ensure you can get the best screening for you based on your medical and family history. Some communities offer no-cost or reduced-cost screening programs to people without financial resources. Other communities have medical providers who are willing to provide these services on a case-by-case basis. To find a resource in your area, please contact the American Cancer Society at 1-888-227-6446.

What's being done in Ohio to increase access to melanoma of the skin cancer screening for persons with financial need?

The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) has been working with groups in many communities to increase screening opportunities and prevent melanoma of the skin. In 2000, ODH received funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to increase these efforts for all cancers. Our main goal is to help local groups in their efforts to increase cancer screening programs with the goal of decreasing overall cancer incidence and death in Ohio.

For additional information about melanoma skin cancer initiatives in Ohio, please contact the Comprehensive Cancer Program, Ohio Department of Health at (614) 466-2144.

REFERENCES USED IN THIS DATA BULLETIN

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Melanoma Skin Cancer in Ohio
What do I Need to Know?

The Ohio Department of Health

http://www.odh.ohio.gov

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