Lab A12-3  Skin Cancer Prevention

Part I. Skin Cancer Prevention

Fill in the details for a recent or typical day in which you were outdoors in the sun for a significant period of time. Compare your typical behavior with the recommendations for skin cancer prevention.

Time of day: __________ Total duration of exposure: __________
Recommendation: Avoid exposure between 10 A.M. and 4 P.M.

UV index for the day: __________ (UV index ratings are usually available from the newspaper, the local weather bureau, or the NOAA Web site: http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/stratosphere/uv_index.)
Recommendation: Take special care on days with a rating of 5 or more.

Clothing worn (describe): ________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
Recommendation: Wear long-sleeved shirts made of tightly woven cotton fabric, a wide-brimmed hat, and sunglasses with UV protection, and use a lip balm with UV protection.

Sunscreen used? (Y/N) __________ Type and SPF rating: __________
Recommendation: Use a broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher. Look for sunscreens that contain ingredients that block both UVA and UVB rays.

Sunscreen applied __________ minutes before sun exposure.
Recommendation: Apply 30–45 minutes prior to sun exposure.

Amounts of sunscreen applied: __________ ounces (Approximate by comparing the amount you applied with the amount in the full container.)
Recommendation: It takes about 1 ounce to cover an adult in a swimsuit. Many bottles or tubes of sunscreen contain a total of 4 ounces, so 1 ounce would be one-quarter of a typical bottle.

How did your behavior compare with the recommendations? The next time you plan to spend a day outdoors, use this worksheet to help maximize your cancer prevention behavior.

Part II. Skin Cancer Self-Exam

The American Cancer Society recommends a monthly skin self-exam. The best time to do a self-exam is usually after a bath or shower. Use a full-length mirror and a hand mirror so that you can check your entire body for moles, blemishes, and birthmarks. Note anything new, particularly a change in the size, shape, or color of any moles or spots or a sore that doesn’t heal. The ACS recommends the following four-step procedure. Check off each step as you perform a self-exam.

_____ 1. Examine your body front and back, then right and left sides (with arms raised).
_____ 2. Bend your elbows and look carefully at your forearms, upper underarms, and palms.
_____ 3. Sit, if it is more comfortable, to look at the backs of your legs and your feet. Don’t forget the soles of your feet and the spaces between your toes.
_____ 4. Use the hand mirror to examine the back of your neck and your scalp. Part your hair or use a blow-dryer to lift your hair and give you a close look at your scalp.

If you have many moles and spots, keep track of them with a chart. Draw a simple outline of a body and mark the location of the moles and spots and what you observed during the last check. Report any suspicious areas or changes to your physician.