



IT'S TIME TO 'SPRING' INTO ACTION AGAINST THE SUN

Australia's leading organisation for the diagnosis and treatment of all skin diseases, the Australasian College of Dermatologists (ACD), is urging Australians to stay covered up, despite the onset of the warm spring weather.

The Honorary Secretary of the ACD, Dr Stephen Shumack, says spring sunshine often catches people unaware and as a result, can lead to more cases of serious sunburn than in the peak summer months of January and February.

"People need to stay in the habit of covering up in order to protect themselves from the sun's harmful rays, whether that be by wearing a light long sleeved top or using SPF 30+ sunscreen," says Dr Shumack.

"Otherwise people are leaving themselves exposed to deadly levels of ultraviolet radiation which can cause dangerous skin damage, sometimes leading to skin cancers and even melanomas.

Australia has the highest incidence of melanoma in the world with more than 8000 Australians diagnosed with the disease each year, leading to the deaths of over 1000.

Dr Shumack says alarmingly, it's also the most common form of cancer in the 15-30 age group.

"Unfortunately, some Australians still love having a tan, despite the dangers of skin damage acquired obtaining that tan.

"It's also important to note that solariums are no safer than being in the sun when it comes to tanning.

"Cancer research shows that solariums can increase people's risk of skin cancer, wrinkles and premature ageing, with concentrated doses of UV radiation up to five times the strength of the midday sun.

"It's a deadly mentality if you think having a tan is a sign of health and beauty", says Dr Shumack.

"The irony of that thinking could be tragic."

MEDIA ENQUIRIES

Dr Stephen Shumack
Honorary Secretary
The Australasian College of Dermatologists
(0418) 212 576

or

Alison Crew
S2i Communications
(0412) 394 996