

News From...



The Australasian College of Dermatologists

There is no safe place in the sun National Skin Cancer Action Week 2005

With summer giving us an early preview of things to come, Australia's Dermatologists are warning that in the next 12 months the number of people throughout the country who will be treated for sun-related skin cancers will fill the MCG three times over.

The message is being delivered by Australia's leading professional body for the diagnosis and treatment of all skin cancers, the Australasian College of Dermatologists and it coincides with National Skin Cancer Action Week, 13-19 November, 2005.

"This is a united effort to try and get the urgent messages of sun safety through to the general public," says Dr Stephen Shumack, Honorary Secretary of the ACD.

"Both the ACD and the Cancer Council see the real effects that skin cancer has on individuals, their families and friends everyday, and therefore our message to "stay out of the sun" needs to be reinforced now, as we head into another hot summer."

National Skin Cancer Action Week will focus on common skin cancers, the increasing number of such cases, and the early detection and prevention of skin cancer.

Melanoma is the most serious form of skin cancer, and is responsible for the death of almost 1,000 Australians per year, (approximately ten times the incidence in the United Kingdom).

"The number of people who see their GP or dermatologist for treatment of skin cancer this year will be enough to fill the MCG three times over, says Dr Shumack.

"What is more alarming however is that the deaths of more than a 1000 Australians a year are due to skin cancer, many of which are preventable.

"We do promote the message that prevention is better than cure. Surgical treatment is painful and too often disfiguring, to say nothing of the significant costs to the patient and the healthcare system," he adds.

The ACD with the Cancer Council say there are simple measures people can take heed of to protect themselves from the sun. "We recommend reducing sun exposure as the sun's rays are strongest between these hours. Try to stay in the shade as much as possible, wear a wide-brimmed hat, and cover your arms and legs with clothing. Also apply a sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher."

For further information, the public can visit www.dermcoll.com.au and for a list of activities being held action National Skin Cancer Action Week visit www.cancer.org.au

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