

2023

Melanoma & Skin Cancer

AWARENESS
MONTH TOOLKIT



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**
Division of Public Health



Comprehensive
Cancer Control

Collaborating to Conquer Cancer

NORTH CAROLINA

Introduction

The 2023 Melanoma and Skin Cancer Awareness Month toolkit is a set of resources to support public health, healthcare providers and other professionals across the state of North Carolina. The resources in this toolkit are designed to help your agency/organization promote awareness of melanoma (skin cancer) as well as develop strategies and or interventions to reduce the skin cancer burden in our state. You can use the information and resources in this toolkit in the following ways:

- Create a melanoma and skin cancer messaging campaign to educate residents about the importance of skin cancer prevention, screening, and treatment.
- Expand partner networks.
- Establish a policy, systems, and/or environmental change on skin cancer screening.
- Implement evidence-based skin cancer interventions.

The NC Cancer Prevention and Control Branch serves as a resource and guide for your efforts to help reduce the burden of skin cancer and cancer related health disparities in North Carolina. Additional strategies and best practices can be found in the [2020-2025 NC Cancer Plan](#).

For more information or additional resources, contact Sarah Arthur, NC Comprehensive Cancer Control Program Manager at Sarah.Arthur@dhhs.nc.gov.

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Sample Article

(Your organization) recognizes May as Melanoma and Skin Cancer Awareness Month. Skin cancer is the most common cancer in the United States, with melanoma being the third most common. Melanoma is the most serious type of skin cancer. It begins in the cells that give your skin color, called melanocytes. Melanomas often occur in areas of sun exposure but can happen anywhere on the body. Often the first sign of melanoma is a change in the size, shape, color, or feel of a mole. An estimated 16,032 people living in North Carolina were diagnosed with melanoma and 1,310 people died from melanoma between 2017 and 2021.¹

The warm May weather encourages people to spend more time outdoors. Too much ultraviolet radiation from the sun and indoor tanning booths can increase your risk of getting skin cancer.

To help lower your risk of developing melanoma and other skin cancers:

- Seek shade when possible.
- Use sunscreen (SPF of 30 or higher).
- Wear appropriate clothing (sunglasses, hat, long-sleeved shirts, long pants, and skirts) when possible.
- Avoid tanning beds.
- Check your skin for all the spots (moles, freckles, and age spots) on your body. If you notice any new or changing spots, contact a health care provider.
- Know your family history of skin cancer.²

Talk with a doctor about your risk factors and they can help you decide what skin cancer screening test is right for you. For more information about melanoma and skin cancer, (insert your contact information).

References:

1. Cancer Statistics and Reports 2023 | NC SCHS
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Skin Cancer | CDC

Sample Proclamation

If you want to reach out to your local elected leaders to help elevate awareness, here's a proclamation template you can customize for local audiences. Please fill in local data and name/title as appropriate. Melanoma (skin cancer) data specific to your county can be found in the [N.C. Cancer Incidence Rates and N.C. Cancer Mortality Rates](#) (click on All Counties by Specified Site tabs) located on the NC State Center for Health Statistics website under Cancer Statistics and Reports.

SKIN CANCER AWARENESS MONTH A SAMPLE PROCLAMATION

(For local governments) WHEREAS, skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the United States; and

WHEREAS, in North Carolina, the white population are diagnosed and die from melanoma, a form of skin cancer, far more than all minority populations combined. White males have a much higher rate of being diagnosed and die from melanoma than white females; and

WHEREAS, individuals living in North Carolina were diagnosed with melanoma, at a rate of 25.9 per 100,000 population between 2017 and 2021. In addition, individuals living in North Carolina died from melanoma at a rate of 2.1 per 100,000 population between 2017 and 2021; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that XX people in XXXX County, North Carolina were diagnosed with melanoma (skin cancer) and XX people in XXXX County, North Carolina died from melanoma (skin cancer) between 2017 and 2021; and

WHEREAS, skin cancer is also considered one of the most preventable cancers, and people can actively reduce their risk of skin cancer by applying sunscreen, wearing sun protective clothing and sunglasses, seeking shade, avoiding tanning devices, and visiting a dermatologist yearly; and

WHEREAS, the Friday before Memorial Day is *National Don't Fry Day*, raising awareness of sun safety and encouraging everyone to take steps to protect their skin, especially as the summer months begin. *Don't Fry Day* is an opportunity for all people to make a lifetime commitment to practice sun safety; and

WHEREAS, the (County Name/Organization Name) encourages people to protect themselves and their families against sun damage, and to promote sun safety awareness and education in our communities;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, (Representative name), (Representative Title) do hereby proclaim May 2023, "**SKIN CANCER AWARENESS MONTH**" in (location) and commend its observance to all residents.

Sample Social Media

If your organization uses social media sites (i.e., Facebook, Instagram, and/or Twitter), Melanoma and Skin Cancer Awareness Month is a great time to engage and educate your audience. Communication surrounding skin cancer should consider health literacy, health equity, and encourage prevention, early detection, and survivorship.

Sample Social Media Posts

1. For people of color, when skin cancer develops in non-sun-exposed areas, it's often in a late stage when diagnosed. Luckily, you can find #skincancer early. Check out these tips: <https://bit.ly/3dwS59o>
2. What are some of the signs of #melanoma? This guide from @CDCgov can help you assess changes in your skin: <http://bit.ly/2GSmXTc>
3. #CompCancer professionals: Looking for PSE change solutions to prevent skin cancer? Start here: <https://bit.ly/2Vj04Ob> #MelanomaAwareness
4. Communities across the country are finding innovative ways to reduce the burden of skin cancer and melanoma. Explore their stories and learn more: <http://bit.ly/2JhhyFY>
5. Tanning in the sun or in a tanning bed damages your skin. Overtime, this damage can lead to prematurely aged skin (e.g., wrinkles and uneven skin color), and, in some cases, skin cancer: <http://bit.ly/2VG1eFy>
6. Exercising or being outside is great, but don't forget your sun protection! <http://bit.ly/2uHWX8a>
7. What can you do to reduce your risk of skin cancer, including #melanoma? Get some tips: <http://bit.ly/2GPxn6i>
8. Share your #SunSafeSelfie and join the conversation to raise awareness on the benefits of sun protection! <https://bit.ly/3dzFblJ>
9. The Friday before Memorial Day is "Don't Fry Day!" Help us raise awareness and reduce the rates of skin cancer, including melanoma: <https://bit.ly/3hReC38>

Reference:

1. GW Cancer Center; Cancer Control TAP. Melanoma and Skin Cancer Awareness Month Campaign. <https://cancercontroltap.org/news/melanoma-and-skin-cancer-awareness-month-campaign>

Policy, Systems, and Environmental (PSE) Change

Policy, Systems, and Environmental (PSE) changes support behavior change for large segments of people or entire populations. They create spaces for groups of individuals to consider making healthy choices. PSE strategies focus on the health of the population, while interventions focus on the health of individuals.

Policy change is a law, ordinance, resolution, regulation, or rule that encourages or discourages certain behavior. This policy can be a small policy or big policy. An example of a policy change is an organization adopting a sun safety policy that outlines the definition of skin cancer and rules/guidelines for employees to follow when exposed to sunlight.

System change is a change in how things are done in an organization, agency, institution, network, or setting. An example of a system change is incorporating sun safety curriculum at a worksite. Environmental change is a change in places where people work, play, shop, worship, and learn. An example of an environmental change is adding sunscreen dispensers at a local park.

PSE changes can remove barriers to improve health behaviors. For example, an after-school program does not have shade in their outdoor play spaces. One solution is to have sunscreen available in every room in the facility. PSE changes can put barriers on unhealthy behaviors such as limiting use of screen time in after-school programs.

Your organization may want to implement PSE changes to improve health behaviors associated with skin cancer, but they may not know where to start. You can reach out to one of the staff at the NC Comprehensive Cancer Control Program and/or review the [2020-2025 NC Cancer Plan](#). In addition, you can look at skin cancer PSE change success stories found on the [Center Disease Prevention and Control website](#) and [George Washington Cancer Center, Action 4 PSE Change website](#).

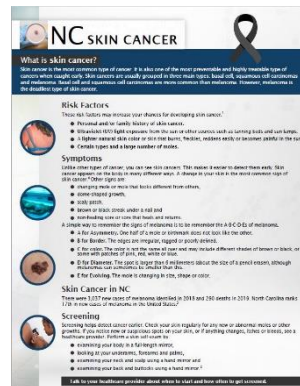


Evidence-Based Interventions (EBIs)

Evidence-based interventions (EBIs) have proven to be effective. For a list of sun safety EBIs, look at the [2020-2025 NC Cancer Plan](#) or visit the [National Cancer Institute website](#).

NC Comprehensive Cancer Control Program Resource Hub

The NC Comprehensive Cancer Control Program (CCCP) Resource Hub provides easy-to-read educational tools that can be used with clients, customers, and the general community. These *free* resources can be downloaded or requested by completing the order form located on the [NC CCCP Resource Hub webpage](#). Please allow four weeks for the materials to be delivered. If you want more, please call 919-707-5300. Below are a few skin cancer resources available on the [NC CCCP Resource Hub webpage](#).



(Skin Cancer Fact Sheet)



(Skin Cancer Awareness Month Banners)

Resources

American Academy of Dermatology Association. 2023.
<https://www.aad.org/public/diseases/skin-cancer>.

American Cancer Society. 2023. Skin Cancer. <https://www.cancer.org/cancer/skin-cancer.html>.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2023. Skin Cancer.
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Don't Fry Day. 2023. National Council on Skin Cancer Prevention.
<https://skincancerprevention.org/get-involved/dont-fry-day/>

George Washington Cancer Center; Action 4 PSE Change. <https://action4psechange.org/>.

George Washington Cancer Center; Cancer Control Technical Assistance Portal. March 2022. Melanoma and Skin Cancer Awareness Month Campaign.
<https://cancercontroltap.org/news/melanoma-and-skin-cancer-awareness-month-campaign>.
[Accessed 6 April 2023]

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<https://www.dph.ncdhhs.gov/chronicdiseaseandinjury/cancerpreventionandcontrol/docs/NC-CancerPlan-2020-2025-NC-CancerBranch.pdf>.

NC DPH: NC Advisory Committee on Cancer Coordination and Control. 2022.
<https://publichealth.nc.gov/chronicdiseaseandinjury/cancerpreventionandcontrol/acccc.htm>.

NC DPH: NC Cancer Prevention and Control Branch. 2023.
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NC DPH: NC State Center for State Statistics. North Carolina Cancer Statistics and Reports. Available at: <https://schs.dph.ncdhhs.gov/data/cancer.cfm> [Accessed 12 April 2023].

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<https://www.skincancer.org/get-involved/skin-cancer-awareness-month/toolkit/>.

Sun Safety Evidence-Based Programs Listing. 2023. Available at:
<https://ebccp.cancercontrol.cancer.gov/topicPrograms.do?topicId=102269&choice=default>.

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