

YOUR HEALTH

Duradiamond Healthcare Newsletter
July 2020


Duradiamond
Building Healthy Business



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SKIN CANCER AND HOW TO AVOID IT

Skin cancer is one of the most common forms of cancer in the UK. Most skin cancers are caused by exposure to ultraviolet light in the sun, which damages the DNA in the skin cells. The damage can happen before a cancer can develop. Skin cancers can be cured if detected early. Causes and risk factors:

- **Skin type:** people who are very fair skinned, especially those with fair or red hair, are more at risk of developing melanoma, as are people with a lot of freckles. People with darker skins can still get melanoma but they have more natural protection against it.
- **Sun exposure:** most skin cancers are caused by exposure to the sun. People who burn easily in the sun are particularly at risk. Past episodes of severe sunburn, often with blisters, and particularly in children, increase the risk of melanoma.
- **Age:** the risk of melanoma increases with age so it is more common in older people. However, younger people can also develop it.
- **Sunbeds:** people have an increased risk of melanoma if they have ever used a sunbed because sunbeds expose people to ultraviolet light (radiation). The risk is highest for people who use a sunbed before the age of 35.
- **Previous skin cancer:** people who have already had skin cancer have a greater risk of getting another one compared to someone who hasn't. This is most likely because of sun exposure. Whilst there is an increased risk, this doesn't mean that you will definitely develop another skin cancer.
- **Family history of skin cancer:** there may be some inherited genes that slightly increase the risk of non-melanoma skin cancers, but most non-melanoma skin cancers do not run in families.
- **Damaged immune system:** people who have a reduced immunity due to an underlying illness or treatment are at increased chance of getting a melanoma.



There are two types of skin cancer: melanoma and non-melanoma. **Tips to avoid skin cancer:**

- **Protect yourself** from the sun's harmful UV rays by spending time in the shade when the sun is at its strongest (between 10am and 4pm) and use sunscreen to prevent burning. Some sun is good for you as it helps with Vitamin D production but take care not to burn.
- **People who burn easily** should always use a minimum **SPF of 30 and a 4-star UVA rating** during the summer. You should never use sunscreen in order to spend longer in the sun. Cover commonly burned areas like the shoulders and face with clothing and a hat.
- **Check your skin regularly for changes;** about once a month check your skin in a well-lit room, understand what is normal for you so it's easy to spot any changes and report them to your doctor early. When checking, remember what to look out for to speak to your doctor: (i) **A**symmetry: the two halves of your mole do not look the same (ii) **B**order: the edges of your mole may be irregular or jagged and show some notches (iii) **C**olour of your mole is uneven, with different shades of black, brown and pink (iv) **D**iameter – most melanomas are at least 6mm in diameter.

ALL ABOUT HEPATITIS

The liver is just as vital an organ as the heart, but people often fail to appreciate the importance of keeping it healthy. It is the largest solid organ in the body: it's about the size of a rugby ball. It is located mainly in the upper right portion of your abdomen under the diaphragm and sits above the stomach.

The liver performs hundreds of jobs and is a vital organ and gland. It fights infection and disease, destroys poisons and drugs (including alcohol), cleans the blood, controls the amount of cholesterol and processes food once it has been digested.

It works hard and can take a lot of abuse, but it is like an elastic band - it can only stretch so far before it breaks. **Look after your liver and it will look after you.**



SEDENTARY WORKING

Get up, stand up! Evidence on sedentary working shows employees need to get moving. Employers should note that office workers sit on average ten hours each day and 70% of the total time we spend sitting is at work. Scientific evidence is growing fast on the negative effects of sedentary working.

The NHS **physical activity guidelines**, for adults aged 19 to 64, are that we should do some type of physical activity every day. Any type of activity is good for you and the more you do the better. However, just 16% of people are managing to achieve the 150 minutes of exercise recommended per week.

Research suggests that **sitting for more than four hours per day puts us at risk**, irrespective of exercise outside of work. The negative effects of prolonged sitting include:

- Burning fewer calories, which makes us more likely to gain weight
- Changes to metabolism, where our bodies may struggle to break down sugars and fats
- A lowered immune system, making us more susceptible to illness
- The weakening of bones, which may lead to osteoporosis
- Loss of muscle strength and flexibility, due to not regularly using our muscles.

It can also affect our mood, increase the risk of certain cancers and heart diseases, as well musculoskeletal issues and a myriad of other detriments to our health.

Tips to improve the amount of time that we sit:

- Take regular breaks and go for a walk at lunchtime
- Take the stairs!
- Standing desks: switch between standing and sitting at your desk and aim to do this for 15 to 30 minutes per hour
- Active workstations where you can walk or pedal at your desk
- Move outside work: if most of your working day is spent sitting, make simple changes in the evening so you are not clocking up too many additional sitting hours outside work.

Acute hepatitis is an inflammation of the liver that has a duration of less than six months. The most common causes of acute hepatitis are alcohol abuse and viral infection. Clinically, the patient experiences early symptoms of general malaise (discomfort, pain, illness, depression), fatigue, loss of appetite and jaundice may follow.

Chronic hepatitis is an inflammation of the liver lasting longer than six months. Some patients have no symptoms, with abnormal liver function blood tests the only sign of inflammation. Other patients continue to have symptoms and can rapidly progress to more serious liver disease such as cirrhosis (a condition in which the liver does not function properly due to long-term damage), liver failure and death.

Viral hepatitis may be caused by a large variety of viruses. The most well-known virus causes hepatitis A, B, and C. Hepatitis A is transmitted when pathogens in faecal particles are passed from one person to the mouth of another. It ultimately cures itself. Hepatitis B and C are transmitted through blood and bodily fluids and more commonly cause long-term complications. 350 million people worldwide are chronically infected with hepatitis B.

Primary prevention of infection with hepatitis viruses can be achieved either through immunisation (hepatitis A and hepatitis B), or through taking care to reduce risk factors for infection. To protect yourself:

- Never share razors, nail scissors or toothbrushes
- Cover wounds, especially when you play sport
- Only use licensed tattoo and piercing studios and make sure all equipment used has been sterilised
- Use a condom during sex
- Never share drug equipment, and don't use rolled up banknotes for cocaine
- If you need medical treatment abroad, make sure only sterile equipment is used.

Treatment depends on the cause of the hepatitis.

For further advice and guidance on hepatitis visit the British Liver Trust at <https://britishlivertrust.org.uk/>

Sources: NICE, CDC, British Liver Trust, Personnel Today, NHS, British Skin Foundation, Skin Health UK, Cancer Research UK