



Melanoma of the Skin

Melanoma in California:

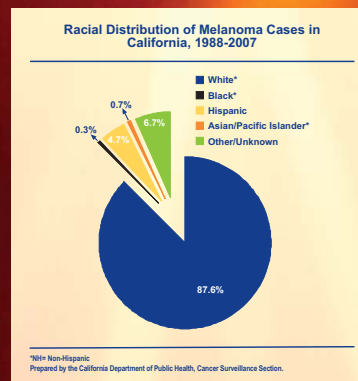
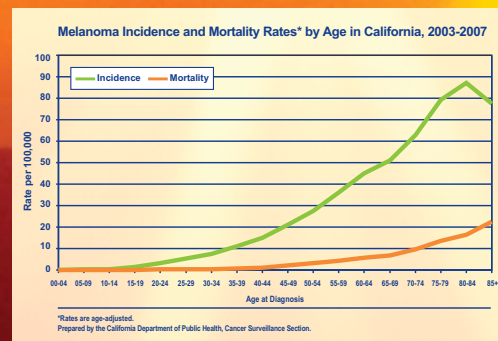
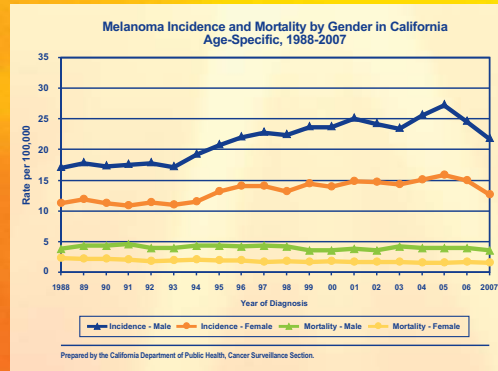
Melanoma, the most deadly form of skin cancer, is primarily associated with sun or ultraviolet light exposure. In 2009, it is estimated 7,280 new cases of invasive melanoma will be diagnosed, and over 800 deaths will be reported in California. White populations are at the greatest risk for developing melanoma.

Melanoma Risk Factors:

- Fair skin
- Sun exposure
- Severe sunburn in childhood
- Large moles present since birth (congenital moles)
- Age
- Family history of melanoma

Preventing Melanoma:

- Reduce sun exposure between 10:00 A.M. and 4:00 P.M.
- Use protective clothing, such as long sleeves, long pants, and a broad-brimmed hat
- Use sunscreen with a Solar Protection Factor (SPF) of 15 or higher
- Avoid artificial sources of ultra violet (UV) light (tanning booths, sun lamps)



Warning Signs:

Warning signs include changes in the size, shape, and/or color of a mole, or a sore that does not heal. When evaluating changes in a mole, follow the ABCD rule:

- A: Asymmetry (one side does not match the other)
- B: Border irregularity (edges are ragged or irregular)
- C: Color (is not uniform, with varying degrees of tan, brown, or black)
- D: Diameter (the size of the mole is greater than 6 millimeters, or larger than a pencil eraser)



Photographs from the American Cancer Society Textbook of Clinical Oncology, Second Edition.

Early Diagnosis Saves Lives:

Early detection of melanoma improves survival. The five-year survival rate for early stage invasive melanoma is 94 percent, compared to five-year survival rate of 14 percent for melanoma that have spread to other parts of the body.



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