Joseph T. Hickey, MD

Environmental Toxins & Their Relationship to SKIN CANCER



We hear it all of the time, stay out of the SUN, put your sunscreen on, and wear a hat, long sleeve shirt and pants that cover you while out walking the beach.

When I walk the beach where I live in Hilton Head Island, SC, I observe that people are following this advice. They are lathered in sunscreen,

Lead : - [] + []

and yet, skin cancer, nonmelanoma basal and squamous, and melanoma cases are increasing.

Each year in the United States, there are more than five million new cases of melanoma skin cancers. Each year, there are more new cases of skin cancer than cancers of the breast, prostate, lung and colon combined. One in five Americans will develop skin cancer throughout their lifetime. Why is our prevention advice not working?

"We need 20 minutes of sunlight per day to stimulate and enhance our immune function."

As usual, we do not discuss or even acknowledge the true mechanism for developing skin cancer. We will do that here but first, one more statistic. Organ transplant patients are 100 times more likely to develop squamous cell cancers than the average person. Now that is a clue. Organ transplant patients require immune suppressive drugs to prevent organ rejection. When you suppress the immune system, you are going to get cancer.

How about ENHANCING your immune system to PREVENT skin cancer? Oh my goodness, what a concept! It is probably more effective for prevention than taking a bath in sunscreen, and it is easy to do. We will get to that shortly.

The sun and our exposure to it has not changed in the last 50 years. There may come a time when because of our disregard for our environment, the ozone falls apart and we will all fry. But, that has not happened yet. We need sunlight. Actually, we need 20 minutes of sunlight per day to stimulate and enhance our immune function. Sunlight enhances and activates Vitamin D3, which in turn, instructs our dendritic lymphocytes to repair us and defend from cancer and infection. Eliminate sunlight and we lose that immune enhancement. There are also several studies that have confirmed that sun exposure can actually prevent skin cancer. Occurrence has been found to decrease with greater sun exposure, and can be increased with the use of sunscreens.

Finally, melanoma is more common in people who work indoors than in those who work outdoors. And melanoma is more common in non-sun exposed areas of the skin, than on sun exposed areas. Why all of this confusion and misinformation?

Sunlight is necessary as we stated for enhancement of immune function through stimulation of Vitamin

D3. However, ultra violet light, especially UVA is carcinogenic, but your skin is designed by the good Lord to repair that damage so you can make clean, healthy, new skin. Your skin expects to have DNA damage from sunlight. If your repair mechanism works, you don't get skin cancer and you reap the benefits of sunlight.

It is what is in your skin and what is not in your skin that causes cancer. Don't blame the sun. Your skin has a gene which produces an enzyme that repairs all skin DNA damage. It is your DNA repair shop called P53 and it can repair all the UVA damage and produce healthy skin. P53 depends on zinc for its function. Environmental toxins; mercury, lead, arsenic, nickel and cadmium, get into your skin and displace zinc from your P53, rendering it useless in the DNA repair process. The sun has not changed, but each year, there is more exposure from our environment. Coal burning factories release tons of mercury and arsenic into the air. We leaded gasoline for over 60 years. Our body is designed to pull minerals out of the food from our soil for our function. Analyze the soil and you will know what is in your skin. When you disable your P53, you age your skin prematurely and develop cancer. We will probably not succeed in cleaning up the environment any time soon, but you can clean up your skin and other organs of carcinogenic metals by removing them with chelation therapy. Both intravenous and oral chelation can remove the troublesome metals from you and replace them with the appropriate mineral. Then your skin and organs can protect themselves.

It is also what is not in your skin that can lead to cancer. When UVA damages your DNA, it becomes a free radical. Free radicals need to be neutralized to prevent cellular damage. This support is easy to achieve. Vitamin C is essential; it helps run the whole repair process. You need plenty of it, a minimum of 4000-6000 mg a day. N-acetyl cysteine (NAC) 600 mg twice a day helps promote glutathione, which in turn, protects DNA and cellular function. Chlorella and Resveratrol reduce skin aging and thinning by reducing matrix metalloproteinase (MMP) activity. These protein digestive enzymes; collagenase, elastase and hyaluronidase, excessively, thin your skin by breaking down collagen and elastin. Chlorella and Resveratrol reduce this enzyme activity.

There is more here than just the SUN. Be your own health advocate. Clear the toxic carcinogenic metals from your skin with chelation therapy, and place the correct mineral and antioxidants in your skin and organs to prevent cancer. Then, if you still want to use sunscreen, use it after 20 minutes of sunlight.