



# FLASCO BRIEF

## Survivor Newsletter

# AUGUST 2020

**Love the sun? Don't hold back!**

**Go running outside, take the kids to sports practice, or head out for a family vacation, just don't forget to take care of your skin.**

Summer Sun Safety Month, observed in August, encourages you to enjoy your summer, but take precautions to avoid overexposure to the sun's ultraviolet rays. And if you notice anything unusual on your skin, see your provider.

Skin cancer is the most common cancer in the United States and worldwide. More Americans are diagnosed with skin cancer annually than all other cancers combined.

- 1 in 5 Americans will develop skin cancer by the age of 70.
- Having 5 or more sunburns doubles your risk for melanoma.
- When detected early, the 5-year survival rate for melanoma is 99 percent

### YOUR SKIN IN THE SUNSHINE STATE

Florida ranks second in the nation for the highest rate of new melanoma cases. What's a Floridian to do? Fortunately, if you know what to look for, such as spotting atypical moles, you'll get early warning signs of skin cancer, making treatment easier and more effective, health experts say. Squamous cell carcinomas may appear as flat reddish or brownish patches in the skin, often with a rough, scaly, or crusted surface. They tend to grow slowly and usually occur on sun-exposed areas of the body, such as the face, ears, neck, lips, and backs of the hands. At first, a basal cell carcinoma comes up like a small "pearly" bump that looks like a flesh-colored mole or a pimple that doesn't go away. Sometimes these growths can look dark. Or you may also see shiny pink or red patches that are slightly scaly. Another symptom to watch out for is a waxy, hard skin growth



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## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

*By Julie Newberry*



One of the best defenses against the fear and uncertainty that can accompany a cancer diagnosis is knowledge. Finding the right sources of information, however, can be tricky, even daunting. But it does not have to be that way.

Beyond the patient's health care team — the oncologist, nurses and other specialists who treat and provide support throughout the cancer journey — peers can be an important source of knowledge. Other patients who share their experiences with cancer and treatment provide a vital and often helpful perspective.

Be sure to check out FLASCO's list of support groups featured on [www.Patients.FLASCO.org](http://www.Patients.FLASCO.org) in the "Support in Your Area" section here: <http://patients.flasco.org/resources/support-in-your-area/>

## AUGUST CANCER AWARENESS

**Summer Sun Safety Month**



# NAVIGATING CANCER

## TIPS FOR USING SUNSCREEN

- Sun damage builds up over time. It is important to use sunscreen every day, even if it is cloudy.
- Choose a broad-spectrum sunscreen that protects against both UVA and UVB radiation. Make sure it is water resistant and has a sun protection factor (SPF) of 30 or higher. Other types of sunscreen may help prevent sunburn, but they will not protect against skin cancer.
- Use a lip balm or lipstick that contains sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30.
- Apply at least 1 ounce of sunscreen 15 to 30 minutes before going outdoors. One ounce is enough sunscreen to fill a shot glass.
- Reapply sunscreen to your entire body every 2 hours. Reapply every hour if you are swimming or sweating.
- Sunscreen creams are better for dry skin. Gels are better for the scalp or hairy areas.
- Wear sunscreen year round whenever you are outside.
- Do not use sunscreens that have expired.

## **Other Sun Protection Tips**

- Limit sun exposure. The sun's rays are the most intense between 10:00 AM and 4:00 PM.
- Practice the shadow rule: if your shadow is shorter than you, you should find shade.
- Always keep babies younger than 6 months old completely covered and in the shade.
- Pay attention to the UV index. This numbered scale measures how damaging exposure to the sun will be on any particular day. It is often included in the weather report. When the index is 10 or higher, people should try to stay indoors.
- Be careful around reflective surfaces. Water, snow, and sand reflect the damaging rays of the sun and increase your risk of getting sunburned.
- Wear protective clothing and sunglasses. Make sure you have a long-sleeved shirt, long pants, and a hat that shades the face, neck, and ears. Dark clothing with tightly woven fabric blocks more sun than white or loosely woven fabrics. For additional protection, look for clothing made with special sun-protective materials. Make sure your sunglasses have 99% to 100% UV absorption.
- Be aware of medication side effects. Some medications may make you more sensitive to the sun. These include specific types of antibiotics, anti-inflammatories, antifungals, blood pressure medications, and some types of chemotherapy.
- Avoid recreational sunbathing. Also, do not use sun lamps, tanning beds, or tanning salons.



## **Financial Assistance for Cancer Patients**

Financial navigators Dan Sherman and Aimee Hoch discuss Medicare and Medicaid programs and how to qualify for co-pay assistance. [Learn More](#)

## Coping with Cancer in Your Day-to-Day Life

### Keep Up with Your Daily Routine (Source: NCI)

If you feel well enough, keep up with your daily routine. This includes:

- Going to work
- Spending time with family and friends
- Taking part in activities
- Going on trips

Think about how you want to spend your time and who you like to be with.

What makes you happy? What types of things do you enjoy the most?

### **Have Fun**

You can still have joy in your life while having cancer. Sometimes people with cancer try new, fun things that they have never done before. For instance, have you always wanted to ride in a hot air balloon or go on a boat cruise? What fun things have you always wanted to try, but have never taken the time to do?

Try to do something just for fun, not because you have to do it. But be careful not to tire yourself out. Some people get depressed when they are too tired. Make sure to get enough rest so you feel strong and can enjoy these fun activities.

### **Finding Humor and Laughing**

If you like to joke with your friends and family do not stop now. For many people, humor is a way to gain a sense of control. Laughter can help you relax. When you laugh, your brain releases chemicals that produce pleasure and relax your muscles. Even a smile can fight off stressful thoughts. Of course, you may not always feel like laughing, but other people have found that these ideas can help:

- Ask people to send you funny cards
- Enjoy the amusing things children and pets do
- Watch funny movies or TV shows
- Listen to comedy recordings and podcasts
- Buy a funny desk calendar
- Read humor-related books or articles
- Check out websites and videos on the Internet. If you do not own a computer, use one at your local library

## Physical Activities

Research shows many people find they have more energy when they take part in physical activities such as swimming, walking, yoga, and biking. They find that these types of exercise, or anything that gets their body moving, helps to keep them strong and makes them feel good. A bit of exercise every day:

- Improves your chances of feeling better
- Keeps your muscles toned
- Speeds your healing
- Decreases fatigue
- Controls stress
- Increases appetites
- Decreases constipation
- Helps free your mind of bad thoughts

Even if you have never done physical activities before, you can start now. Choose something you think you'd like to do, and get your doctor's okay to try it. There are exercises you can do even if you have to stay in bed.

## Set Goals

You may find it helpful to look beyond your treatment and think about what you want to do when you feel well again. Many people set goals so that they can work toward something. For example, they research and plan a trip, or they think about classes and learning things they've always meant to learn. They may look forward to going to a wedding or meeting a new grandchild.

## 4 Tips to Maximize Your Walk (Source: ACS)

Walking can be one of the best ways to get exercise and stay healthy. You can walk alone, with a pet, or with a partner – even a socially distant one if you walk at least 6 feet apart or on opposite sides of the street. You also can try chatting with someone on a hands-free device while walking. All you need is a good pair of shoes and a safe place to walk.

Brisk walking can help you maintain a healthy weight, strengthen your bones and muscles, and improve your balance and coordination. It can boost your mood and help you sleep better. It also burns calories: a 150-pound person walking briskly will burn about 297 calories per hour. Research shows that getting regular physical activity and staying at a healthy weight can help reduce your risk of cancer as well as heart disease and diabetes.

A brisk walk counts as a moderate-intensity activity. The American Cancer Society recommends that adults get at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity activity each week. If that is more than you can do right now, do as much as you can and work your way up. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, even just 5 minutes of physical activity has real health benefits.



While a little walking is good, more is even better. The faster, farther, and more often you walk, the greater the benefits. A recent study found that higher step counts were linked to lower death rates from heart disease and cancer. To get the most out of walking, make sure you are ready before hitting the road. Follow these tips from Mayo Clinic:

- Set a goal for how long you want to walk.
- Be sure you are wearing comfortable, supportive footwear with a roomy toe box.
- Warm up by walking at a slow pace for about 5 minutes.
- End by walking slowly for about 5 minutes and stretching. This cools you down and reduces stress on your muscles.

## FDA UPDATES

### Latest Oncology Drug Approvals

#### BREAST CANCER

fixed-dose combination of pertuzumab, trastuzumab, and hyaluronidase–zzxf (PHESGO, Genentech, Inc.) - June 29, 2020: [More Information](#)

#### COLORECTAL CANCER

pembrolizumab (KEYTRUDA, Merck & Co.) – June 29, 2020: [More Information.](#)

#### CUTANEOUS SQUAMOUS CELL CARCINOMA

pembrolizumab (KEYTRUDA, Merck & Co., Inc.) – June 24, 2020; [More Information](#)

#### MYELODYSPLASTIC SYNDROMES (MDS)

oral combination of decitabine and cedazuridine (INQOVI, Astex Pharmaceuticals, Inc.) - July 7, 2020: [More Information](#)

#### UROTHELIAL CARCINOMA (UC)

avelumab (BAVENCIO, EMD Serono, Inc.) – June 30, 2020:- [More Information](#)

#### **More FDA Information:**

- \* [FDA: Office of Hematology and Oncology Products](#)
- \* [FDA: Approved Drugs: Questions and Answers](#)

# SUPPORT GROUP HIGHLIGHTS

## Skin Cancer Foundation

Since our founding in 1979, The Skin Cancer Foundation has sought to save and improve lives. We empower people to take a proactive approach to daily sun protection and the early detection and treatment of skin cancer. Read more about our work and support our mission.

<https://www.skincancer.org/about-us/what-we-do/>

## FEATURED RESOURCES

### American Cancer Society:

Get detailed information on skin cancer and test your knowledge with our skin cancer quiz. (ACS)

- \* [Skin Cancer Videos](#)
- \* [Skin Cancer Quiz](#)
- \* [Basal and Squamous Cell Skin Cancer](#)
- \* [Melanoma Skin Cancer](#)
- \* [Merkel Cell Skin Cancer](#)

### Related Resources

- \* [I Survived Melanoma and I Want You to Know: Indoor Tanning Is Dangerous](#)
- \* [Melanoma: Risk Factors and Prevention](#)
- \* [10 Tips for Protecting Your Skin from the Sun](#)
- \* [Winter Skin Care Tips](#)

### More Information

- \* [American Academy of Dermatology: Prevent Skin Cancer](#)
- \* [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: What Can I Do to Reduce My Risk of Skin Cancer?](#)
- \* [U.S. Food and Drug Administration: Sunscreen: How to Help Protect Your Skin from the Sun](#)
- \* [Skin Cancer Foundation: Prevention Guidelines](#)
- \* [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency: Sun Safety](#)
- \* <https://www.cancer.net/navigating-cancer-care/prevention-and-healthy-living/protecting-your-skin-sun>

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