

facts about: *Skin Cancer*

## NEVADA

**Skin cancer is the most common cancer diagnosed in the United States.**<sup>1-4</sup> This fact sheet presents statistics about skin cancer for Nevada and the United States as a whole.

### just the facts: *Skin Cancer in Nevada*

- **Sunburns.** A 2004 survey found that 38.3% of white adults in Nevada had at least one sunburn in the past year.<sup>5</sup> Sunburns are a significant risk factor for the development of skin cancer.<sup>6-8</sup>
- **New Cases of Melanoma.** An estimated 480 state residents were diagnosed with melanoma in 2009. Melanoma is responsible for about 75% of all skin cancer deaths.<sup>2,9</sup>
  - Humboldt County has the highest rate of new melanoma diagnoses in Nevada, a rate that also exceeds the national average.<sup>10</sup>
- **Deaths from Melanoma.** About 68 people in Nevada die of melanoma every year.<sup>11</sup>
  - The melanoma death rate among Nevada residents is higher than the national average.<sup>11</sup>
  - The melanoma death rate is nearly three times higher among Nevadan men than women.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>1-41</sup> All references can be found on the SunWise Web site at: [www.epa.gov/sunwise/statefacts.html](http://www.epa.gov/sunwise/statefacts.html)

### survivor story: *Stacey Escalante*



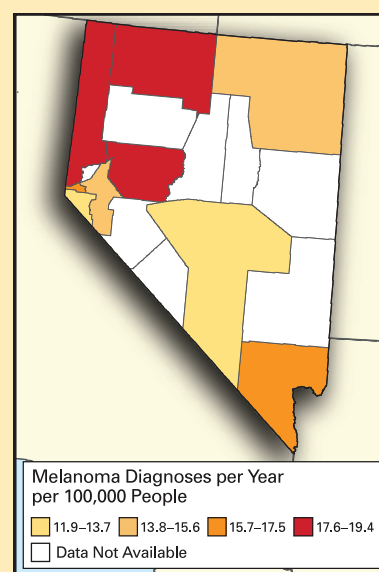
"You better get that checked." Despite my family's concern, I waited six months before having a doctor check the small, red spot on my back. We never thought it was skin cancer. My whole life stopped when I was diagnosed with Stage III melanoma.

I couldn't care for my kids while undergoing two surgeries during two years of treatment. I had to make time for cancer. Five years later and still cancer-free, I realize how ignorant I'd been about skin cancer. I was tanorexic before my diagnosis, sun-baking with baby oil as a teen and using tanning beds as an adult. I thought since I tanned well I was safe—how wrong I was.

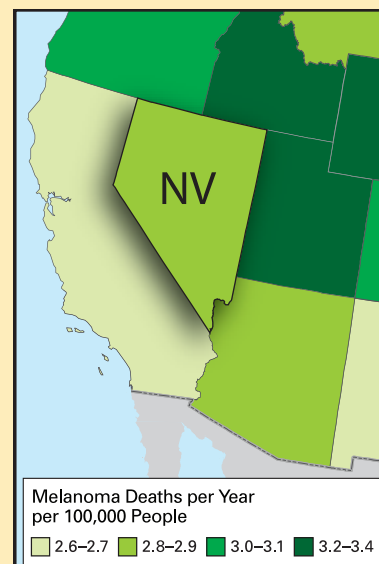
Now, I enjoy the sun underneath an umbrella or palapa with sunscreen and floppy hats, and make sure to cover up when running marathons. I publicize my story hoping others learn from my mistakes, especially moms who too often put themselves last. Cover up, wear sunscreen, hats and sunglasses, and get your skin checked regularly!

*Stacey Escalante lives in Las Vegas, NV with her family where she works to raise melanoma awareness.*

#### Annual Rate of New Melanoma Diagnoses, 2002–2006<sup>10</sup> All Races, Both Sexes, All Ages



#### Melanoma Death Rates, 2003–2007<sup>11</sup> All Races, Both Sexes, All Ages



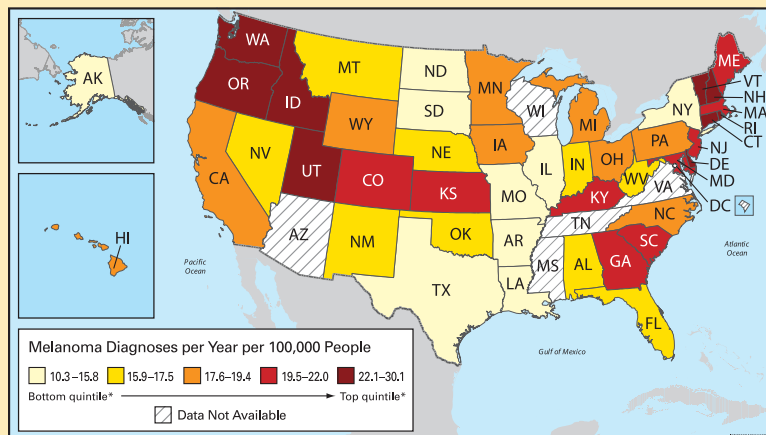
## The Cost of Skin Cancer

*In the U.S., medical costs to treat skin cancer are estimated at almost \$2 billion annually.<sup>12-13</sup>*

### statistics: *Cause for Concern*

- **In 2009, more than 1 million people were diagnosed with skin cancer, making it the most common of all cancers.<sup>1-4</sup> More people were diagnosed with skin cancer in 2009 than with breast, prostate, lung, and colon cancer combined.<sup>2</sup> About 1 in 5 Americans will develop skin cancer during their lifetime.<sup>15</sup>**
- **One American dies of melanoma almost every hour.<sup>2</sup>**
- **Melanoma is the second most common form of cancer for adolescents and young adults (15-29 years old).<sup>16</sup>**
- **For people born in 2009, 1 in 58 will be diagnosed with invasive melanoma<sup>17</sup>—more than 25 times the rate for people born in 1935.<sup>18</sup>**

**National Annual Rate of New Melanoma Diagnoses, 2002–2006<sup>14</sup>**  
All Races, Both Sexes, All Ages, Age-adjusted Rates



\* Please note that delays in reporting melanoma cases to cancer registries are more common since they are usually diagnosed and treated in non-hospital settings such as physician offices. States are grouped into quintiles based on rates of melanoma diagnoses. A quintile is a statistical “block” representing 20% of a total. Because data are available for only 45 states, each quintile includes nine states. For example, the nine states with the highest melanoma rates—22.1 to 30.1 diagnoses per 100,000 residents every year—are in the top quintile.

### what works: *An Ounce of Prevention*

- **Unprotected exposure to ultraviolet light—a known human carcinogen—is the most preventable risk factor for skin cancer.<sup>6,15,19-23</sup> Taking simple steps as early in life as possible can reduce one’s risk.<sup>2,4,24,25</sup>**
- **Early detection of melanoma can save one’s life.<sup>26-32</sup> Skin examinations may be the best way to detect skin cancer early.<sup>2,33-37</sup>**
- **The CDC found evidence that education and policy approaches in primary schools (for children) and in recreational or tourism settings (for adults) can improve sun safety behaviors.<sup>38-39</sup>**
- **Student self-reported data<sup>40</sup>—collected as part of the U.S. EPA’s SunWise Program—showed that teachers using the SunWise Tool Kit for 1-2 hours yearly can spur increases in students’ sun safety knowledge and attitudes and small to modest improvements in short-term sun safety behaviors.<sup>41</sup>**
  - Using the data mentioned above, published modeling results show SunWise teaching between 1999 and 2015 could prevent more than 50 premature deaths and 11,000 future cases of skin cancer, saving the country more than \$30 million in medical costs and productivity losses.<sup>41</sup>

### skin cancer prevention: *Action Steps*

- **Do Not Burn.** Overexposure to the sun is the most preventable risk factor for skin cancer.
- **Avoid Sun Tanning and Tanning Beds.** UV light from tanning beds and the sun causes skin cancer and wrinkling.
- **Use Sunscreen.** Generously apply a broad spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher. Reapply at least every two hours, and after swimming or sweating.
- **Cover Up.** Wear protective clothing, such as a long-sleeved shirt, pants, a wide-brimmed hat, and sunglasses with 99-100% UVA/UVB protection, when possible.
- **Seek Shade.** Seek shade when the sun’s UV rays are most intense between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- **Watch for the UV Index.** Pay attention to the UV Index when planning outdoor activities to prevent overexposure to the sun.

<sup>1-41</sup> All references can be found on the SunWise Web site at: [www.epa.gov/sunwise/statefacts.html](http://www.epa.gov/sunwise/statefacts.html)