

**Dangers of the Sun**

**Why do I need to be concerned about being in the sun?**

* *Although sunlight helps our bodies produce vitamin D, long-term sun exposure can lead to photoaging, which can be unattractive and dangerous!* Other effects of excess sun exposure include:
* *Sunburns-*painful, look bad and can cause long-lasting damaging effects.
* *Wrinkles-*not just a normal part of aging. Over 90% of wrinkles are cause by overexposure to the sun which weakens skin elasticity.
* *Freckles, age spots, and uneven skin tone-*are common problems and can be difficult to hide with makeup and can cost money to treat!
* *Leathery skin-*results of time as repeated sun damage changes the texture of the skin.
* *Actinic keratosis-*is a rough scaly path that forms on the skin and can develop into skin cancer.
* *Cataracts-*are a form of eye damage that causes cloudy vision. Spending time in the sun without protecting your eyes increases the chance of developing eye conditions like this.
* *Skin cancer-*in the uncontrolled growth of abnormal skin cells and is most often causes by damage to the skin cells from exposure to the sun.

**Skin cancer, if caught early can be treated and cured. With simple steps you can check your body to make sure growths do not turn into bigger problems using the A-B-C-D method.**

**A-Asymmetry (is the mole or growth perfectly circular or misshapen?)**

**B-Border (does the mole or growth have uneven edges?)**

**C-Color (is the mole or growth all ONE color or several colors?)**

**D-Diameters (measure your mole or growth-anything larger than ½ mm should be referred to your dermatologist or specialist)**

**\*As always, if you’re unsure of anything-ask your doctor!**

* **Remember to cover yourself using clothing, a hat, sunglasses, and using shade when necessary.**
* **Avoid midday sun and the hours between 11am-3pm are when the sun’s rays are the strongest.**
* **Uses sunscreen everyday with an SPF rating of at LEAST 15 or greater and reapply when necessary.**
* **Never use tanning beds or booths!**