YCPARMIA Safety Journal

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Is It Skin Cancer? According to the Skin Cancer Foundation, skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the United States. Each year there are more new cases of skin cancer than the combined incidence of breast, prostate, lung and colon cancers. YCPARMIA currently has one open skin cancer claim; protect yourself by increasing your own skin safety awareness. Below are the various categories of skin damage:

DYSPLASTIC NEVI (atypical moles) are unusual benign moles that may resemble melanoma. People who have them are at increased risk of developing single or multiple melanomas. The higher the number of these moles someone has, the higher the risk; those who have 10 or more have 12 times the risk of developing melanoma compared to the general population. Dysplastic nevi are found significantly more often in melanoma patients than in the general population.

ACTINIC KERATOSIS (AK) is the most common pre-cancer. Scaly or crusty growths (lesions) caused by damage from the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays, actinic keratosis (AK) is also known as solar keratosis. They typically appear on sun-exposed areas such as the face, bald scalp, lips, and the back of the hands, and are often elevated, rough in texture, and resemble warts. Most become red, but some will be tan, pink, red, and/or flesh-toned. Untreated AKs can advance to squamous cell carcinoma (SCC), the second most common form of skin cancer, and some experts believe they are actually the earliest stage of SCC.

BASAL CELL CARCINOMA (BCC) is the Most Frequent Form of Skin Cancer. BCCs are abnormal, uncontrolled growths or lesions that arise in the skin's basal cells, which line the deepest layer of the epidermis (the outermost layer of the skin). They often look like open sores, red patches, pink growths, shiny bumps, or scars. BCC can be highly disfiguring if allowed to grow, but almost never spreads (metastasizes) beyond the original tumor site. Only in exceedingly rare cases can BCC spread to other parts of the body and become life -threatening.

SQUAMOUS CELL CARCINOMA (SCC) is an uncontrolled growth of abnormal cells in the squamous cells skin's upper layers (the epidermis). SCCs often look like scaly red patches, open sores, elevated growths with a central depression, or warts; they may crust or bleed. It can become disfiguring and sometimes deadly if allowed to grow. SCCs may occur on all areas of the body, but are most common in areas frequently exposed to the sun, such as the rim of the ear, lower lip, face, bald scalp, neck, hands, arms and legs. Often the skin in these areas reveals telltale signs of sun damage, such as wrinkling, changes in pigmentation, and loss of elasticity.

MELANOMA is the most dangerous form of skin cancer, these cancerous growths develop when unrepaired DNA damage to skin cells triggers mutations that lead skin cells to multiply rapidly and form malignant tumors. Melanomas often resemble moles; some develop from moles. The majority are black or brown, but can also be skin-colored, pink, red, purple, blue or white. If melanoma is recognized and treated early, it is almost always curable, but if it is not, the cancer can advance and spread to other parts of the body, where it becomes hard to treat and can be fatal. While it is not the most common of the skin cancers, it causes the most deaths. About 120,000 new cases of melanoma in the US are diagnosed each year.

PERSONAL ERGONOMIC CARE

Despite reports that work-related musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) have declined in recent years because of greater awareness and better workplace ergonomic programs, MSDs still affect workers in almost every industry and occupation. You can help reduce MSD risks in your office by raising awareness and educating others.

Example: *Office workers at one company talked to their supervisor about the stress they experienced from long hours of working at the computer. Bending and reaching to retrieve files was also a problem.*

Solution: Their supervisor trained them to use the adjustments already available in their chairs, computers, and furniture systems. Furthermore, employees were encouraged to take microbreaks to stretch and relieve muscle tension caused by sitting and keyboarding. In addition, the supervisor explained how rearranging workstations could minimize reaching and bending.

SAFETY IS A WAY OF LIFE

A safe workplace builds successful lives

OSHA says that safe workplaces provide the "consistency and reliability needed to build a community and grow a business." We agree. We believe that the combination of OSHA regulations, our safety and health policies and programs, and your active participation mean fewer accidents and injuries and a better place for all of us to work.

But a safe workplace does more than that. It also promotes better, more successful lives for every employee. A safe workplace provides an environment in which our jobs become a way to make a good life for ourselves and our families.

Still not convinced? Think about this. According to OSHA, a worker who suffers a disabling injury can lose 40% of his or her income over 5 years. Families can lose even more because of the increased stress, conflict, and divorce that is associated with occupational injuries and illnesses.

Electrical Safety Myths

Did you know that electricity is the fifth largest workplace killer? Perhaps that's because many people have some very dangerous misconceptions about electricity.

Myth: Normal household current only causes a mild shock.

Fact: Even 110-120 volts can be deadly. It depends largely on what resistance the person's body has to the current, the body part in contact, the duration of the exposure, and other conditions such as the presence of moisture. Resistance is measured in ohms. A person's body may naturally have a resistance of 100,000 ohms. But on a damp day, that resistance can drop to just 1,000 ohms.

Myth: All individuals are affected the same by contact with current.

Fact: Different people react differently to the same shock. Those with heart problems are especially at risk. Even a mild shock can cause a heart attack, often fatal.

Myth: "If I don't touch it, I can't be hurt by it."

Fact: Electricity can jump across an air space, in what's called an arc flash, with a temperature three times that at the surface of the sun.

Myth: "A disconnected circuit is safe to work on."

Fact: Not if the circuit includes batteries or capacitors that store electricity and can release it suddenly even if the "plug" is no longer in the wall. This is the reason TV sets and similar devices carry "Do Not Open" warnings on their cases. Even junked sets can be dangerous.