



## HEALTHY LIVING

### Melanoma

#### Spot the A-B-C-D-E Signs

The 2015/2016 winter season has been milder than normal across Canada. This is evidenced by plenty of summer sunny days in the winter and spring seasons. While it's nice to be able to soak up some unexpected vitamin D, you should also be prepared to protect your skin against both UVA and UVB rays that the sun emits.

The Save Your Skin Foundation states there are more than 80,000 cases of skin cancer diagnosed in Canada every year and in fact, about 1,050 people will die from it. Skin cancer, also known as melanoma, for the most part can be prevented by avoiding or minimizing your exposure to the harmful UV rays. Here are some sunsmart tips:

- Since UV rays are the strongest between 11am – 4pm, limit your time in the sun during this period.
- Be cognizant of the daily UV index forecast and use sunscreen when the index is three or more.
- Covering up is key. Wear a hat, glasses and light-coloured clothing to offer skin protection and keep cool at the same time.
- Keep hydrated by drinking plenty of water.

- Do not use artificial tanning beds or lamps as they greatly increase your risk of skin cancer.

It is also a good habit to conduct regular inspections of all moles, spots and skin growths. Knowing the “ABCDE” guidelines can help you decide whether or not to seek medical attention and ultimately save your life.

- A – Asymmetry:** Both halves look identical.
- B – Borders:** All edges should be even, not scalloped or notched.
- C – Colours:** There isn't a variety of shades (brown, red, white, blue or black).
- D – Diameter:** The mole/spot has a diameter less than 6mm (about the size of a pencil eraser).
- E – Evolution:** There hasn't been a change in size, shape, colour, height or a new symptom development, such as bleeding, itching, or crusting.

80,000+ cases of skin cancer are diagnosed in Canada every year.

TRG  
GROUP BENEFITS

Source: Save Your Skin Foundation

## HEALTHY HEART

### Risky Business

#### Take a Stand for Heart Health

If you work in an office environment, chances are you are logging in at least six hours of sitting time out of your eight hour work day. Couple that with other sedentary activities such as commuting, watching television, and eating meals/snacks is how you spend more than half of your waking hours, according to the medical journal, *Annals of Internal Medicine*. If you continue down this path, you will incur more health risks, such as obesity, cardiovascular disease, diabetes and even certain cancers. However, there are things you can do to circumvent such ailments. Here are just a few:

- There are apps that you can install on your computer to remind you to take a break – namely to stretch or even just to stand up for a few minutes.
- Save yourself multiple email exchanges by going over to your colleague in person to talk and encourage them to do the same.
- Stand up when you are talking on the phone whether you are using a wired telephone or a headset.
- Standing desks are fast becoming a hot trend in the office, as are balance boards to stand on. You reduce your sitting time by keeping you off your chair and giving your core a workout.
- Take a break with your colleagues by suggesting to go for a short walk/run after eating your lunch. While you are chatting, you won't even notice you are getting a mini work-out.
- If you take public transit to work, elect to get off one stop before your regular stop and walk the extra distance. If you drive to work, look for parking that's a bit farther from the office (assuming you do not have a paid reserved spot).
- Try cycling to work once a week and slowly build up the frequency.

## HEALTHY MIND

### Depression and Diabetes

#### Understand their Link

Depression is more common in individuals with diabetes than in comparison with the general population. In fact, did you know that 30% of people with diabetes have depressive symptoms? Did you also know that people with depression have a much higher risk of developing type 2 diabetes? Both are true, according to the Canadian Diabetes Association Clinical Practice Guidelines Expert Committee (2013).

While the link between the two conditions isn't clear, it is suggested that depression may develop as a result of stress and anxiety from managing diabetes. An individual with depressive symptoms who goes undiagnosed or untreated is likely to have poorer physical and mental functioning, which makes it harder to manage diabetes. This could lead to a host of other problems, including the following:

- Poorer blood glucose management
- Diabetes-related health problems
- Decreased quality of life
- Increased family conflicts
- Higher health-care costs

The Canadian Diabetes Association recommends individuals with diabetes get screened regularly for psychological distress and psychiatric disorders, such as depression and/or anxiety. Treatment for depression can be successful, if given sufficient time to get the needed care. Popular treatments include psychotherapy, medication or a combination of the two options.

As always, lifestyle choices such as eating a proper diet, maintaining a good body weight, getting plenty of regular exercise, and engaging in social activities, are always recommended for better outcomes for the body and mind.