



Cancer Matters Wessex

Skin Cancer Awareness Month – Communications Toolkit.

Intro

May is Skin Cancer Awareness Month and there is a growing concern over the high levels of skin cancer we are now seeing in the UK. Several organisations, including Melanoma Focus and Melanoma UK have dedicated Skin Cancer Awareness Month pages on their websites and have provided social media assets you can download. We have compiled the information, to produce this toolkit to support you raising awareness this month with your teams. Please feel free to use as much (or little) of the information below, to support any campaign or awareness raising in your area.

Facts About Skin Cancer:

(Sources: <https://melanomafocus.org/about-us/may-is-melanoma-awareness-month/> and <https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/health-professional/cancer-statistics/statistics-by-cancer-type/melanoma-skin-cancer>)

- Melanoma skin cancer is the 5th most common cancer in the UK, accounting for 5% of all new cancer cases (2017-2019)
- 1 in 36 men will be diagnosed with skin cancer in their lifetime
- 1 in 47 women will be diagnosed with skin cancer in their lifetime
- 86% of melanoma skin cancer cases are preventable
- There are two types of skin cancers: melanoma and non-melanoma
- Non-melanoma refers to skin cancers which develop in the upper layer of your skin (the epidermis). You can be diagnosed with basal cell carcinoma (BCC), most non-melanoma diagnoses are BCC, or squamous cell carcinoma (SCC). Both these types of skin cancers don't spread to other parts of your body.
- Non-melanoma cancers usually develop in areas which are most exposed to the sun such as your face, ears, hands, shoulders, upper chest and back.
- Melanoma can spread to other parts of your body which is why it's the more serious type of skin cancer.
- Overexposure to the sun or sunbeds are the main cause of all skin cancers.
- More than 1 in 4 skin cancer cases are diagnosed in people under 50, which is unusually early compared with most other types of cancer
- Brown or black skin is more susceptible to a type of melanoma that is not associated with sun exposure, but appears on the palms, soles, under the nails and in mucosal



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membranes such as the mouth. These areas should be regularly checked for people with this skin type. (source: [British Skin Foundation](#))

Risk factors:

- a previous non-melanoma skin cancer.
- a family history of skin cancer.
- pale skin that burns easily.
- a large number of moles or freckles.
- taking medicine that suppresses your immune system.
- a co-existing medical condition that suppresses your immune system.

You can minimise your risk of developing skin cancer by practising sun safety:

- use high factor sunscreen.
- dress sensibly in the sun.
- limit the amount of time you spend in the sun during the hottest part of the day (11am-3pm).
- avoid sunbeds and sunlamps.

Regularly checking your skin for signs of skin cancer can help lead to an early diagnosis and increase your chance of successful treatment.

Assets for the public:

- Skin check leaflet from Melanoma Focus: <https://melanomafocus.org/about-melanoma/skin-check-leaflet/>
- Melanoma Focus (<https://melanomafocus.org/>) have shared a number of visual assets for social media – these can be found here: <https://melanomafocus.org/about-us/may-is-melanoma-awareness-month/>
- Are you at risk of Skin Cancer <https://www.britishskinfoundation.org.uk/are-you-at-risk-of-skin-cancer>
- Leaflet to order copies or download: <https://www.macmillan.org.uk/cancer-information-and-support/stories-and-media/booklets/understanding-skin-cancer>

Charities/Websites with information for the public:

- <https://www.melanomauk.org.uk/>
- <https://www.britishskinfoundation.org.uk/are-you-at-risk-of-skin-cancer>
- <https://melanomafocus.org/about-us/may-is-melanoma-awareness-month/>



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- <https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/skin-cancer>
- <https://www.macmillan.org.uk/cancer-information-and-support/skin-cancer>

Support and advice for Healthcare professionals:

- Gateway C webinar: “How confident are you in accurately assessing a skin lesion?”
<https://bit.ly/3JlzVaA>
- [Mind the Gap](#) – A handbook of clinical signs in Black and Brown Skin
- Skin Check leaflets can be downloaded from Melanoma Focus:
<https://melanomafocus.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Know-Your-Skin-and-Nail-Leaflet-A4-FINAL-Sept21.pdf>
- Leaflet to order copies or download: <https://www.macmillan.org.uk/cancer-information-and-support/stories-and-media/booklets/understanding-skin-cancer>

Suggested messaging for public (Facebook, twitter, text messages or website)

Suggested Website/Newsletter copy:

This month is Skin Cancer Awareness Month and we are raising awareness of the risks of skin cancer and ways you can help to reduce your risk.

86% of cases of melanoma are preventable yet increasing numbers of people are being diagnosed with this type of skin cancer. There are now more than 16,000 new cases each year in the UK.

Being sun-safe and regularly checking your skin for any changes, are two really important ways you can reduce your skin cancer risk.

For more information or to download a skin check leaflet to help monitor your skin, please visit Melanoma Focus website:

<https://melanomafocus.org/about-us/may-is-melanoma-awareness-month/>

If you have room, you can embed the following CRUK video as well:

<https://youtu.be/pp3V21i8P3w>

Suggested Text messages (for primary care)

- May is Skin Cancer Awareness Month. Check your skin regularly and contact your GP if you notice any changes or have concerns.



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- Check your skin - contact your GP if you notice new or changing moles or lesions
Protect your skin from the sun - use SPF 30+ sunscreen
- If you are spending time in the sun this week(end), please remember to use sunscreen to protect your skin and reduce your risk
- 86% of skin cancer cases are preventable, please know your skin and speak to your GP if you notice any changes.

If you can add a link – here is a tinyurl which I have created for Melanoma Focus webpage:
<https://tinyurl.com/3ccr9vbd>

Potential GP Screen video:

What is Sunburn: <https://youtu.be/pp3V21i8P3w>

Suggested Social Media posts:

- May is Skin Cancer Awareness Month. Check your skin regularly and contact your GP if you notice any changes or have concerns. <https://tinyurl.com/3ccr9vbd>
#KnowYourSkin #CancerAwareness [Insert image from Melanoma Focus [assets](#)]
- Remember to regularly check your skin and contact your GP if you notice new or changing moles or lesions. Protect your skin from the sun #KnowYourSkin #SunSmart #SkinCancerAwarenessMonth [Insert image from Melanoma Focus [assets](#)]
- 86% of skin cancer cases are preventable, please know your skin and speak to your GP if you notice any changes. <https://tinyurl.com/3ccr9vbd> #KnowYourSkin
- What is sunburn and why should you protect your skin? Check out this video from CRUK #KnowYourSkin #SkinCancerAwarenessMonth <https://youtu.be/pp3V21i8P3w>
- Melanoma skin cancer is the 2nd most common cancer in males and the 3rd most common in females in the 15-44 age group Find out more and #KnowYourSkin <https://tinyurl.com/3ccr9vbd>

Tags:

Wherever possible, please add tags to your social media 😊

@NHS_WCA Wessex Cancer Alliance is also on LinkedIn, Instagram and Bluesky

@CancerWessex Cancer Matters Wessex is also on Facebook

@focusonmelanoma

@CR_UK