

Scouting: It's not just for crops

By JOSH FLINT

OVERALL, farmers are a healthy bunch. Cancer mortality rates are 10% to 25% lower among farmers, compared to the rest of the world. However, Lucinda Buescher, Southern Illinois University School of Medicine associate professor of dermatology, says the farming population is at a much higher risk for skin cancer. While working in the sun comes with the territory, Buescher says there are ways to prevent skin cancer.

First off, she recommends monthly self screenings. "During these self examinations, they need to identify their moles and keep track of them," Buescher explains. "By the time you're 30, you should have in place all the moles you'll have in your life."

Since the average adult has 40 moles, it may be a good idea to take photos. Having the spouse assist in the exam is another good idea. According to a recent study, patients who had their spouse assist in skin examinations had a higher skin cancer detection rate.

"A lot of farmers have come in here because their wives insisted they have a certain mole checked out," Buescher notes. Oftentimes, a mole that stands out could be the one harboring cancer. Buescher refers to this as an ugly duckling. "It's usually the one people come

Key Points

- Conduct monthly screenings to catch skin cancer early.
- Use sunscreen, long sleeves and a hat to protect against the sun.
- There are three types of skin cancer. Melanoma is the most deadly.

in and say they have a funny feeling about."

While it's easier said than done, Buescher's second prevention technique is minimizing sun exposure. Between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m., the sun's rays have a shorter path through the Earth's ozone layer. Buescher says this means more harmful rays make it to the surface. Ideally, farmers would stay inside during those hours, she adds.

While that may not be possible, farmers should utilize protection against the sun. Wearing long sleeves and a wide-brimmed hat can help keep the sun at bay. Buescher consistently sees cancerous lesions crop up on the back of farmers' necks.

Sunscreen also protects against the sun's harmful rays. Buescher recommends a sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher. "When they figure the SPF rating in the lab, the sunscreen is applied extremely thick, to the point where it will not rub into the skin," Buescher says.

"Usually, no one is getting the SPF on the bottle, because they don't apply it that thick."

Buescher adds that even waterproof sunscreens wear off after about 90 minutes of sweating. Approximately 1 ounce (2 tablespoons) should be applied to the neck and face.

Get the facts

There are three types of skin cancer: basal cell carcinoma, squamous cell carcinoma and melanoma. Patients with a fair complexion have a higher risk of contracting all three types of skin cancer.

Basal cell carcinoma represents 75% of all skin cancer, with 1.2 million new cases per year in the U.S. Although this type does not spread, Buescher says catching it early can result in a smaller scar and more treatment options.

With more than 200,000 new cases each year, squamous cell carcinoma is the second most common skin cancer. Since it can spread to other parts of the body, catching it early is extremely important. Basal cell carcinoma and squamous cell carcinoma tend to look like a pimple or bug bite.

Melanoma is the rarest, deadliest skin cancer. Buescher describes it as the "classic funny looking mole." Melanoma can spread to other parts of the body.

Less than 10% of patients survive



CATCH IT EARLY: Catching squamous cell carcinoma early is extremely important because it can spread to other parts of the body.



COMMON CONCERN: Basal cell carcinoma is the most common type of skin cancer. It also has the highest cure rate. Removing the lesion with a scalpel or curette is a common treatment option.

the most advanced stage of melanoma. However, Buescher says close to 100% of patients survive if the lesion is less than 1 millimeter in thickness. Once the lesion passes 4 mm in thickness, the five-year survival rate is 50%. The chance of a man developing melanoma in his lifetime is 1 in 40.

"Once you've had skin cancer of any type, your risk goes up for having it in other places," Buescher notes.

Yield-robbing residue and compaction problems don't wait for low fuel prices.



WITH FUEL COSTS UP, your first reaction might be cut back on tillage. But when it comes to managing residue, compaction and preparing the soil for spring planting, you can't take shortcuts without sacrificing yield potential and profits. That's why it's so important to choose the tillage system that accomplishes all of your agronomic goals in one pass – the DOMINATOR.®

*Information from University of Minnesota College of Agricultural, Food and Environmental Sciences. Lazarus W., July, 2008.

Eliminate Stalk Shredding

40% better residue sizing than eco-tiger® and you'll save nearly \$10.00 an acre* on an unnecessary stalk shredding operation.

Shatter Yield-Robbing Compaction

Two ranks of shanks provide better soil fracture with more residue clearance than machines with wider shank spacing.

Eliminate Extra Seed Bed Trips

Best in class leveling and 41% reduction in clod size versus competitor's means you'll eliminate an extra seed bed tillage pass.



For more information or to order a FREE DOMINATOR DVD, call 800-957-2873 or visit www.krauseco.com.

