

**Contact:**

Vicky Grogg  
Northwest Cancer Specialists  
Phone (360) 597-1300  
[Vicky.Grogg@usoncology.com](mailto:Vicky.Grogg@usoncology.com)

## **NORTHWEST CANCER SPECIALISTS REMINDS PEOPLE TO PROTECT THEMSELVES TO REDUCE RISK OF SKIN CANCER**

**PORTLAND, Ore., May 4, 2011** – More than two million people in the United States will be diagnosed with skin cancer this year. It is the most common form of cancer in this country, but it can also be one of the most preventable. As part of Skin Cancer Awareness Month in May, Northwest Cancer Specialists (NCS) reminds all people about the importance of protecting their skin from the sun and other sources of ultraviolet (UV) radiation.

UV rays are produced by the sun. They are invisible to the naked eye and are more intense in the summer, at higher altitudes, and in areas closer to the equator. Overexposure to ultraviolet radiation from the sun causes sunburn (erythema), skin cancer, premature aging (skin wrinkling), cataracts (gradual clouding of the lens of the eye), immune system suppression, DNA damage and dilated blood vessels.

The most important way for a person to lower his or her risk for skin cancer is to avoid exposure to UV radiation, either from the sun or other sources such as tanning lamps. The American Cancer Society recommends the following practices for sun safety:

- Protect skin with clothing, such as long sleeve shirts and hats with broad brim.
- Avoid being outdoors when the ultraviolet light is strongest, particularly between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.
- Seek shade
- Use sunscreen and lip balm with an SPF factor of 30 or more on areas of the skin exposed to the sun. Products should be used on hazy or overcast days as well.
- Wear wrap-around sunglasses with at least 99 percent UV absorption to provide the best protection for the eyes and the skin around the eyes.
- Avoid other sources of UV lights, such as tanning beds and sun lamps.
- Protect children from the sun by using the same precautions as adults.

As a community-based cancer care provider in Portland-Vancouver, NCS helps people with cancer and their families by providing easy access to a full range of advanced cancer care services in a setting that allows patients to remain close to their homes and their support network of family and friends. Through our affiliation with US Oncology, one of the nation's largest healthcare services networks dedicated exclusively to cancer treatment and research, NCS can quickly bring the latest advances in therapies, research and technology to where patients live. As a result, patients access the best possible treatment with the least amount of disruption to their daily lives.

### **About Northwest Cancer Specialists**

Northwest Cancer Specialists is a regional oncology and hematology practice with a dedicated team of over 40 medical oncologists, hematologists, gynecologic oncologists and radiation oncologists seeing patients at seven locations in the Portland-Vancouver metropolitan area. For more information, please visit, [www.nwcancer.com](http://www.nwcancer.com).

Northwest Cancer Specialists is united in healing with US Oncology, supporting the nation's foremost cancer treatment and research network to accelerate the availability and use of evidence-based medicine and shared best practices. For more information, visit the company's Website, [www.usoncology.com](http://www.usoncology.com).

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