

facts about: *Skin Cancer*

CONNECTICUT

Skin cancer is the most common cancer diagnosed in the United States.¹⁻⁴ This fact sheet presents statistics about skin cancer for Connecticut and the United States as a whole.

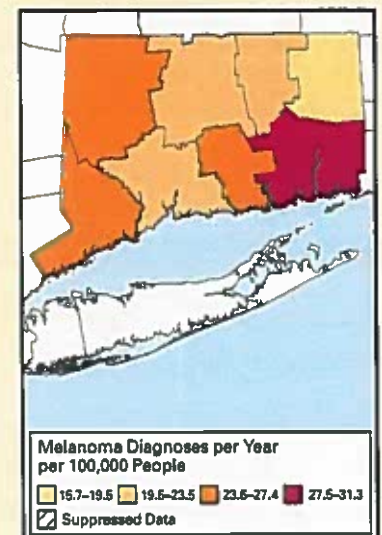
small state: *Big Problem*

- **Sunburns on the Rise.** A 2004 survey found that 43.1% of white adults in Connecticut had at least one sunburn in the past year—an increase from 33.3% in 1999.⁵ Sunburns are a significant risk factor for the development of skin cancer.⁶⁻⁸
- **New Cases of Melanoma.** The rate of new melanoma diagnoses—responsible for 75% of all skin cancer deaths—was 31% higher in Connecticut than the national average from 2001-2005 and was the 8th highest in the U.S.^{9,10} An estimated 1,060 state residents were diagnosed with melanoma in 2008.²
 - New London County has the highest rate of melanoma diagnoses in the state, 79% above the national average.³
- **Deaths from Melanoma.** Approximately 110 people in Connecticut die of melanoma every year.¹¹ Connecticut had the 17th highest melanoma death rate nationally from 2001-2005—7.4% higher than the U.S. average.¹²
 - Tolland County has the highest melanoma death rate in the state, 30% higher than the national average.¹¹

Melanoma Death Rates, 2001–2005¹¹
All Races, Both Sexes, All Ages



Annual Rate of New Melanoma Diagnoses, 2001–2005⁹
All Races, Both Sexes, All Ages



1-41 All references can be found on the SunWise Web site at: www.epa.gov/sunwise/statefacts.html

survivor story: *Paul Buchanan*



In 1995 I had what I thought was a wart removed by my dermatologist. A week later, my doctor called to tell me I had Stage IV melanoma. The prognosis was not good: I was initially given about a year to live. Fortunately, I entered an experimental treatment program that kept the cancer in remission for the next 9 years.

When a lump appeared in my leg again in 2005, tests revealed that the cancer was back and had spread to my bone marrow. I started intense Interleukin-2 therapy, and after four brutal weeks, another biopsy found the cancer was gone. I've now been cancer-free for over three years, and my doctors believe a recurrence is unlikely.

My experience with melanoma has driven home the importance of preventing overexposure to the sun. Exposure today can cause problems in the future, so parents should teach their children to always wear sunscreen. Putting on sunscreen should be second nature, just like wearing a seat belt in the car. Melanoma can be dangerous, but it is also a highly preventable cancer.

Paul Buchanan, a resident of Southington, Connecticut, was 35 when he was first diagnosed with Stage IV melanoma.