



Taking preventive measures while enjoying the outdoors is key in reducing the risk of skin cancer.

Skin cancer treatment readily available locally.

Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the United States – even in northern states such as Wisconsin.

“Skin cancer is most prevalent in the fair-skinned population,” says Michael Tjoelker, MD, a board-certified dermatologist with Agnesian HealthCare’s Dermatology & Skin Care services. “It’s also more common in people who don’t protect their skin as well as they should, although anyone can get skin cancer.”

The most common types of skin cancer are basal and squamous cell carcinoma, two forms of cancer directly related to total cumulative sun exposure. Malignant melanoma, a more severe form of skin cancer, is influenced by hereditary factors and the intensity of sun exposure.

Skin cancers, like all cancers, are easier to treat in the earliest stages, so Dr. Tjoelker recommends inspecting your skin and reporting any abnormal areas to your healthcare provider immediately. A small reddish or pearl-colored lesion that bleeds or irritates

easily may be basal or squamous cell cancer, while melanomas typically present as a dark-colored spot.

A variety of treatment options are available, depending on the size, type, depth and location of the lesion. Some simple, early skin cancers may be treated with topical creams; others are frozen with cryosurgery. Excision, surgical removal of the skin cancer, is a common treatment and can be performed in the office with a local anesthetic. Curettage and electrodesiccation, a procedure that involves scraping away and then burning any remaining cancer cells, and Mohs surgery, a detailed procedure that removes skin growths layer by layer, can also be performed in office.

Agnesian HealthCare is “very well-equipped to help individuals with skin cancer treatments,” Dr. Tjoelker says. “We have essentially all the treatment options available here, from the simplest to the most extensive, as well as providers that have effectively treated more than 30,000 skin cancer cases.”



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