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[Home](#) > [Blog](#) > SKIN CANCER FACTS WITH DERMATOLOGIST DR. JODY LEVINE

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SKIN CANCER FACTS WITH DERMATOLOGIST DR. JODY LEVINE

[By Dr. Jody Levine](#)

SKIN CANCER FACTS: A REAL RISK

Substantially more than 1 million new cases of skin cancer will be diagnosed in the United States this year, more than any other form of cancer. 1 in 5 Americans will develop some form of skin cancer during their lifetime. Skin cancer can be divided into two groups – **nonmelanoma** skin cancer and **melanoma**. The majority of diagnosed skin cancers are nonmelanoma skin cancer of which 80% of these are basal cell carcinoma and about 20% squamous cell carcinoma.



Dangers of tanning: tanning can cause skin cancer. Photo by ~ggvic~

SKIN CANCER PREVENTION: IT'S NEVER TOO LATE FOR SUN SAFETY

Exposure to ultraviolet light, from the sun and indoor tanning devices is the most preventable risk factor for skin cancer. It's never too late to protect yourself and minimize your future **risk of skin cancer**. Early detection is also crucial as skin cancer can be treated if found early. Melanoma has a 99% five year survival rate if detected and treated before it spreads to the lymph nodes. Both basal cell and squamous cell have cure rates approaching 95% if detected early and treated promptly.

SKIN CANCER DETECTION: WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Basal cell carcinoma frequently appears as a pearly bump, whereas squamous cell carcinoma often looks like a rough, red scaly area or an ulcerated bump that bleeds. Any new growth that does not go away in a month's time or that is bleeding, growing or changing should prompt you to see a dermatologist. Melanoma can develop from or near an existing mole or can suddenly appear without warning. New, rapidly growing moles, or moles that itch, bleed, change color or other surface characteristics are often early warning signs of melanoma and warrant prompt attention.

SKIN CANCER TREATMENTS: MELANOMA & NONMELANOMA

A biopsy is performed to confirm the diagnosis. A very superficial basal cell, for example, can sometimes be treated by scraping and burning the lesion, to destroy the cancer cells. However, the general treatment for skin cancer is to excise the lesion. This is an in-office procedure using local numbing medicine. Depending on the method used to cut out the skin cancer, stitches will likely be placed and then removed anywhere from 5 days to 2 weeks later (depending on the part of the body where it was located). For a localized, nonmelanoma skin cancer, there is generally no further treatment needed, except a reminder to be cautious with prevention using sun protection and early detection with routine visits to the dermatologist. Further treatment of melanoma is dependent on the depth of the melanoma and other factors involved.



Dermatologist Dr. Jody Levine

ABOUT DR. JODY LEVINE:

Dr. Jody Levine is an esteemed member of the Beautyfix Panel of experts and a highly respected dermatologist. Dr. Levine is a member of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Dermatology, the American Society of Dermatologic Surgery, the Women's Dermatologic Society, the Society for Pediatric Dermatology and the American Medical Association. Based in Manhattan, Dr. Levine is the co-founder and co-director of [Plastic Surgery & Dermatology of NYC, PLLC](#), a comprehensive facility in Manhattan offering a full range of integrated skincare for the whole family. Dr. Levine practices medical and surgical dermatology, specializing in cosmetic and laser surgery for pediatric and adult patients.

Dr. Levine received her M.D. from the Yale University School of Medicine, graduating with honors, and has been named one of "America's Top Dermatologists of 2009" by the Consumer's Research Council of America. She has published scholarly papers in prestigious journals including *Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology* and *Journal of the American Medical Association*. In addition, she is on the medical advisory board of Parents magazine and is often featured in national beauty magazines, web pages, newspapers, radio shows and television programs. She has been quoted in W Magazine, Elle, Allure, Self, Shape, Marie Claire, New York Magazine and The New York Times. Dr. Levine has appeared on the Martha Stewart Radio, The Montel Williams Show, Fox News, and ABC News.

Dr. Levine firmly believes in educating all patients, from youth through adulthood, on the **dangers of outdoor and indoor tanning**. She stresses the importance of **sun safety** and appropriate skin care, capturing the beauty of youthful skin and making it available to patients of all ages.

Dr. Jody Levine lives in Manhattan with her husband Dr. Elie Levine, a Plastic Surgeon, and their four children, Skyler, Jasmine, Caitlin and William.

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