

Mayo Clinic Minute: Skin cancer concerns for people with darker skin

VIDEO	AUDIO
Jason	Forty percent of all cancers in Caucasians are skin cancer. That number drops significantly to 6% for Hispanics; 5% for Asian Americans, Native Americans and Pacific Islanders; and just 2% for African Americans.
Dr. Sokumbi	"A very small number, but the disparities in terms of the morbidity and the mortality is actually quite scary."
Jason	Dr. Yemi Sokumbi, a Mayo Clinic dermatologist, says African Americans are four times as likely than Caucasians to have advanced stage melanoma.
Yemi Sokumbi, M.D. Dermatology Mayo Clinic	"We have statistics demonstrating that they tend to die of their disease more often, and they tend to have more severe disease."
Jason	She says the No. 1 issue is that many African Americans don't think they need to use sunscreen.
Dr. Sokumbi	"I want to be clear that that is a myth. We do need sunscreen. Black skin comes with an SPF (sun protection factor) of 13. An SPF of at least 30 is what's recommended."
Jason	Awareness and proper self-examinations by patients of color is key.
Dr. Sokumbi	"While Caucasian patients when there's sun damage, we tend to see redness and erythema as a clue to some of that. In dark-skinned patients, what you actually tend to see is hyperpigmentation, so darkening of the skin, or a hypopigmentation, which is lightening of the skin."
Jason	She says any skin concerns should be evaluated by your dermatologist.
Jason	For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I'm Jason Howland.