

OSF Moeller Offers No-Cost Checks Amid Rising Skin Cancer Rates

by Randy Schorfheide

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ALTON— Spring is just days away, the summer season will be here before we know it, temps will be getting warmer, and that means one thing – more fun in the sun. Riverbend region residents will be outside enjoying time at the lake or on the river, playing in backyards or spending time at parks.

But more fun in the sun can also pose health risks and dangers – particularly when speaking of skin cancer.

With our calendars telling us warmer weather is on the way, OSF Moeller Cancer Center (2200 Central Ave, Alton, IL, 62002) will be hosting a FREE skin cancer screening event on Monday, April 1, 3:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Registration is necessary as appointments will be scheduled and conducted every ten minutes throughout the duration of the event. Walk-ins will only be available if time permits, and appointment slots are available.

OSF Moeller Cancer Center providers will be on-hand during the event to conduct screenings and provide valuable information and education on skin cancer.

For more information, please call 618-433-7609 or email Karen.K.Boyd@osfhealthcare.org.

Skin cancer is the out-of-control growth of abnormal cells in the epidermis, the outermost skin layer, caused by unrepaired DNA damage that triggers mutations. These mutations lead the skin cells to multiply rapidly and form malignant tumors.

The main types of skin cancer are basal cell carcinoma (BCC), squamous cell carcinoma (SCC), melanoma and Merkel cell carcinoma (MCC).

Skin cancers can look quite different from one person to another due to skin tone, size and type of skin cancer and location on the body. The two main causes of skin cancer are the sun's harmful ultraviolet (UV) rays and using UV tanning beds.

The good news is that if skin cancer is caught early, your dermatologist can treat it with little or no scarring and high odds of eliminating it entirely. Often, the doctor may even detect the growth at a precancerous stage, before it has become a full-blown skin cancer or penetrated below the surface of the skin.

According to the Skin Cancer Foundation:

- 1 in 5 Americans will develop skin cancer by the age of 70.
- More than 2 people die of skin cancer in the U.S. every hour.
- Having 5 or more sunburns doubles your risk for melanoma.
- When detected early, the 5-year survival rate for melanoma is 99 percent.

You can learn more about skin cancer and programs and services at OSF Moeller Cancer Center by visiting www.osfhealthcare.org/cancer/locations/centers/alton.