What is Skin Cancer?

Skin cancer occurs when skin cells are damaged by overexposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun.

There are three main types of skin cancer:

1. Basal cell carcinoma
2. Squamous cell carcinoma
3. Melanoma - the most dangerous form of skin cancer and the 3rd most common cancer in Australia.

Every Year in Australia...

- Skin cancers account for around 80% of all newly diagnosed cancers
- The majority of skin cancers are caused by exposure to the sun
- GPs have over 1 million patient consultations per year for skin cancer
- More than 750,000 people treated for one or more non-melanoma skin cancers in Australia each year

In 2014, 2,067 people died from skin cancer in Australia, 1,467 from melanoma and 600 from non-melanoma skin cancers. Yet most skin cancers can be prevented by the use of good sun protection.

The 5 Forms of Sun Protection

- Slip on sun protective clothing
- Slop on SPF30+ sunscreen. Reapply every two hours
- Slap on a broad-brimmed hat
- Seek shade
- Slide on wrap-around sunglasses

A combination of these measures, along with getting to know your skin and regularly checking for any changes, are the keys to reducing your skin cancer risk.

Skin Cancer Symptoms

Become familiar with the look of your skin, so you pick up any changes that might suggest a skin cancer. Look for:

- Any crusty, non-healing sores
- Small lumps that are red, pale or pearly in colour
- New spots, freckles or any moles changing in colour, thickness or shape over a period of weeks to months (especially those dark brown to black, red or blue-black in