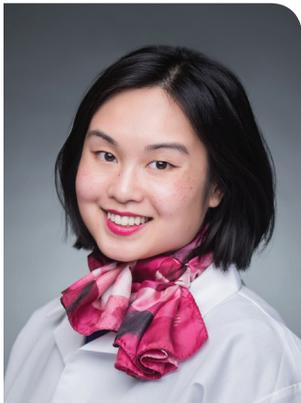


# HEALTHY LIVING CHRONICLES

## Protect Your Skin From Harmful Rays



Did you know that our skin is our largest organ? Learn how to safeguard it.

“Skin cancer is the fifth most common cause of cancer. It can be disfiguring, and if it is melanoma, it can spread to other parts of

your body and cause organ damage,” said Dr. Susan Long, Doctors Community Practices at Crofton. So, protect your skin all through the year!

There are three types of ultraviolet (UV) radiation that can impact skin health:

- ✦ UVA rays age skin cells and can damage their DNA. These rays are linked to long-term skin damage such as wrinkles, but they are also thought to play a role in some skin cancers. Most tanning beds give off large amounts of UVA rays, which have been found to increase skin cancer risks.
- ✦ UVB rays have slightly more energy than UVA rays. UVB rays can damage skin cells’ DNA directly, and are the main types of rays that cause sunburns. They are also thought to cause most skin cancers.

- ✦ UVC rays have more energy than the other types of rays. However, they don’t get through our atmosphere and are not in sunlight. As a result, they are not normally known to cause skin cancers.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) provides several tips to help you protect your skin from UV rays.

- ✦ **AVOID SUN TANNING AND TANNING BEDS.**

UV light from tanning beds and the sun accelerate skin cancer and wrinkling. Melanoma is rising among young adults due to the use of tanning beds.

- ✦ **USE SUNSCREEN.** Generously apply a broad-spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher, even on cloudy days. Reapply it at least every two hours as well as after swimming or sweating.

- ✦ **COVER UP.** Wear protective clothing: a long-sleeved shirt, pants, a wide-brimmed hat and sunglasses with 99–100 percent UVA/UVB protection.

- ‡ **SEEK SHADE.** Go to a shady area when the sun's UV rays are most intense, usually between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- ‡ **WATCH FOR THE UV INDEX.** Pay attention to this index when planning outdoor activities to prevent overexposure to the sun. Even in winter, UV rays can reflect off ice and snow to cause sunburn.
- ‡ **SAFELY GET VITAMIN D.** Practice a diet that includes eating vitamin D fortified foods like fatty fish (tuna, mackerel and salmon), cod liver oil, some dairy products, orange juice, soy milk and cereals. Your doctor may even prescribe a vitamin supplement.
- ‡ **FOLLOW THE WEATHER.** Monitor it and try to stay indoors during high heat advisory days.

‡ **STAY HYDRATED.** Check your urine. If it is usually colorless or light yellow, you may be well hydrated. If your urine is dark yellow or amber color, you may be dehydrated.

Also, check your skin regularly for changing moles and other signs. If you see or feel something abnormal, speak with your primary care physician right away. If you do not have one, we have offices conveniently located in Bowie, Crofton, District Heights, Lanham, Laurel, Riverdale and Temple Hills. Learn more at [DCHweb.org/primarycare](http://DCHweb.org/primarycare).

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## About Doctors Community Health System

Your body is a complex system. Each part has an important role in supporting your well-being. The same is true at Doctors Community Health System. Our network of care can help you maintain and improve your overall health. So, let our system care for yours.

At the heart of this system is our flagship – **Doctors Community Hospital** in Lanham, Maryland. For your convenience, we complement the hospital's medical and surgical programs with more than a dozen centers of care located throughout the area:

- ‡ Ambulatory Surgery
- ‡ Bariatric and Weight Loss Program
- ‡ Breast Health
- ‡ Diabetes Education
- ‡ Digestive Care
- ‡ Emergency Services
- ‡ Endocrinology and Diabetes Care
- ‡ Imaging Services
- ‡ Infusion Care
- ‡ Orthopedic Service
- ‡ Primary Care and Family Medicine
- ‡ Radiation Oncology
- ‡ Rehabilitation Program
- ‡ Sleep Care
- ‡ Surgical Services
- ‡ Wellness Center
- ‡ Wound Care

Contact us for more information or to schedule an appointment.  
 301-DCH-4YOU | 301-324-4968 | [DCHweb.org](http://DCHweb.org)

## STAY CONNECTED!



**Main Campus**  
 8118 Good Luck Road  
 Lanham, Maryland 20706