

Script – Broadcast – Pro wrestler grapples with skin cancer

INTRO

Pro wrestler and actor John Cena admits to never wearing sunscreen when he grew up in Massachusetts. When he later moved to Florida, he still failed to protect his skin from the dangerous rays of the sun.

But a routine visit to a dermatologist quickly changed Cena's attitude. His doctor found a cancerous spot on his chest. A year later, another spot was found near his right shoulder. It was a wake-up call for Cena, who not only applies sunscreen daily now, but he's also become a spokesperson for a sunscreen brand.

Cena said in an interview with PEOPLE that he now feels a responsibility to share the lessons he's learned about skin cancer with others - especially men.

VO

It's that time of the year when people are outdoors for several reasons – sporting activities, vacations, and working outside jobs. But under the brilliant sun rays lurks a potential danger especially to men – skin cancer, more specifically melanoma.

More than 97,000 new melanomas will be diagnosed this year (58,120 in men and 39,490 in women), according to the American Cancer Society. Nearly 8,000 people will die from melanoma, the majority – nearly 5,500 of them – will be men.

(((SOT)))

Ben Guth, nurse practitioner, OSF HealthCare

"Men are more likely to develop skin cancer, in fact twice as likely, to develop melanoma over time because of several different reasons, whether that's related to the type of job that they do because men tend to work outdoors more often," says Ben Guth, a nurse practitioner for OSF HealthCare. "It can be education related where they aren't taught what to look for when it comes to signs and symptoms of skin cancer. And finally, they just don't use sunscreen when they go outside, which is very protective when it comes to sunburns and developing skin cancer in the future." (:30)

TAG

The good news is that if caught early, melanoma and most skin cancers are highly curable. The problem, however, is most skin cancers don't have symptoms until they reach the later stages. So that makes it even more important to take care of our skin and know what to look for.

When applying sunscreen, don't forget to lotion up around the ears, behind the neck and on top of the scalp, especially men who are balding. Ask your partner for a hand to get to those hard-to-reach spots.

Guth strongly recommends men make a standing appointment for a skin checkup. He adds that if something doesn't look or feels right, talk to your primary care provider or dermatologist. Don't wait. And remember to always pack your sunscreen, even on those cloudy days.