

SPOTS Mission, Goals and Strategies

Mission

The basic tenets of the SPOTS program are to teach early detection and prevention measures to the adolescent age group in an effort to increase their knowledge and awareness, positively affect their attitudes and behaviors towards sun protection, promote outreach education in the community by medical/allied health students, and educate medical/allied health professionals in sun protection methods, teaching strategies, and the basics of cutaneous malignancies.

Goals

- Educate adolescent students by increasing their knowledge of early detection and prevention of skin cancer.
- Educate medical/allied health students regarding skin cancer and sun protection.
- Promote change from non-sun-protective to sun-protective attitudes and behaviors in both adolescents and medical/allied health professionals in training.
- Promote outreach education in the community by students training in the medical/allied health fields (physicians, nurses, physician assistants, masters in public health students).

Strategies

- Demonstrate sun safe behaviors through teaching of protective measures to students.
- Present hands-on demonstrations of sun protective products by using students as volunteers to increase their familiarity and comfort with future selection and use of such measures.
- Discuss current societal norms regarding sun protection and their influence on teenagers.
- Utilize medical/allied health students as teachers to better connect with teens due to age proximity.¹
- Disseminate statistics and risk factors of skin cancer through program materials.
- Teach early detection through use of mnemonics,² visual brochures, lecture materials, handouts, hands-on demonstrations, and games.
- Offer practical alternatives^{3,4} to outdoor/indoor tanning.
- Disseminate information to parents (handouts, brochure) to increase arena of influence on teens.⁵
- Utilize a skin analyzer machine to reinforce appearance changes from sun damage.^{6,7,8}
- Show a video encompassing other teens' experiences with melanoma.
- Require SPOTS teachers to complete training on cutaneous malignancies, teaching and interacting with teens, and reviewing/practicing the SPOTS program.

Educational Objectives for Adolescent and Medical/Health Students

Adolescent Student

After attending the SPOTS program, the adolescent student will be able to:

Knowledge

- Name two of the five ABC's of melanoma.
- List two risk factors for skin cancer.
- Identify the main modifiable cause of skin cancer.
- Describe four sun protection methods.

Behavior/Attitude

- Recognize the correlation between skin cancer and exposure to UVR.
- Restate why there is a need for sun protection.
- Discuss the reasons for changing non-protective sun behaviors.
- Describe risk factors for skin cancer.

Medical/Allied Health Student

After teaching the SPOTS program, the medical student will be able to:

Knowledge

- Recite current statistics on skin cancer.
- Name all five of the ABC's of melanoma.
- List the common visual identifiers for basal cell, squamous cell, and melanoma skin cancers.
- List six risk factors for skin cancer.
- Identify the main modifiable cause of skin cancer.
- Describe and teach five sun protection methods.

Behavior/Attitude

- Recognize the value of community outreach and working with other health professionals.
- Apply learned textbook/classroom knowledge regarding skin cancer and sun protection to a community cancer problem through preventative education of adolescents.
- Employ the use of layman's language in lectures, games, and hands-on demonstrations to teach secondary students about a medical topic pertinent to their age group.

Rationale: Physicians, nurses, PA's, and public health educators are lifelong teachers of patients, other medical personnel, family members, and the community. These medical professionals need to know how to teach their technical and heavily jargonized subject by employing various means at a level receptive to a non-medical group of people.

- Recognize the importance of examining the skin during the patient history and physical.

Rationale: No matter what their chosen specialty, all clinicians should be able to perform a basic skin exam. The skin is the body's largest organ, therefore, skin cancer recognition is the responsibility of each and every clinician. Most medical students graduate with few opportunities to observe, learn, or practice the skin cancer exam,^{9,10, 11} and clinical time in dermatology is generally offered only as a medical school elective.¹² SPOTS takes advantage of the fact that teaching a subject is a profound learning experience that will help these medical and allied health professionals be better able to detect skin cancers throughout their careers,¹³ regardless of their specialty.