

Public Health, Epidemiology & Prevention

PEP Talk

Pinellas County Health Department | July 2009

July is UV Safety Month Have Fun in the Sun – But Do It Safely!

While you enjoy outside activities this summer, don't forget to protect yourself and your family from skin cancer by using sunscreen, seeking shade and wearing sunglasses, a hat and sun-protective clothing.



Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the United States. The two most common types, called basal cell and squamous cell carcinomas, are highly curable. However, melanoma, the third most common skin cancer, is the most dangerous, and especially common among young people. Most melanomas are caused by exposure to ultraviolet (UV) light from sunlight or tanning beds.

Know If You Are At Risk

Anyone can get skin cancer, but some things put you at higher risk, such as having:



- ◆ A light natural skin color
- ◆ A family history of skin cancer
- ◆ Exposure to the sun through **work and play**
- ◆ A history of

sunburns early in life

- ◆ Skin that burns, freckles, reddens easily or becomes painful in the sun
- ◆ Blue or green eyes/ Blonde or red hair

Protect Yourself and Your Family

- ◆ Seek shade, especially during midday hours.
- ◆ Cover up with clothing to protect exposed skin.
- ◆ Wear a hat with a wide brim to shade the face, head, ears and neck.

- ◆ Wear sunglasses that wrap around and block as close to 100 percent of both UVA and UVB rays as possible.

- ◆ Apply sunscreen with sun protective factor (SPF) of 15 or higher. Re-apply often.



- ◆ Use sun safety precautions daily, especially when UV rays are strongest (10 AM – 4 PM). UV rays can reach you on both cloudy and sunny days. UV rays also reflect off surfaces like water, cement, sand and snow.

- ◆ Avoid tanning beds. Their UV rays are just as dangerous as UV rays from the sun.

For more information about sun safety, visit:

www.cancer.org,
www.sunsafetyalliance.org,
www.cdc.gov/cancer/skin/basic_info/howto.htm, www.epa.gov/sunwise/ and
<http://familydoctor.org/online/famdocen/home/tools/reviews/0706.html>



Pinellas County Medical Reserve Corps: Volunteers Building Strong, Healthy and Prepared Communities

The **Medical Reserve Corps** (MRC) is a national network of community volunteers who focus on improving the health, safety and resiliency of their communities. Pinellas County's MRC is relatively new, and is based in the Pinellas County Health Department.

MRC units focus on organizing and utilizing public health, medical and other volunteers. MRC volunteers support existing local agencies with public health activities throughout the year and with preparedness and response in times of need when MRC volunteers supplement existing emergency and public health resources.

Public health preparedness is important because communities count on a strong public health system to meet any emergency, be it man-made, weather-related or an emerging infectious disease. MRC volunteers are an important component of the public health system, and help ensure a better community response to emergencies.



The Pinellas County MRC is focused on ensuring members are identified, screened, trained and prepared prior to participating in any activity. While MRC units principally focus on their specific communities, MRC volunteers could also be vital to successful response efforts in a state or national disaster.

On a local level, we collect and verify information on the identity, licensure status, and credentials of volunteers. Then, at a state level, the information is collected and



stored to create a list of all potential health professional volunteers in the state.

The Pinellas County MRC:

- Maximizes health professionals' skills and expertise.
- Assures immediate availability as a result of pre-registration and verified credentials.
- Minimizes duplication of efforts through identifying, registering, screening and managing volunteer health professionals.
- Improves resource planning and allocation, which reduces costs.
- Increases the preparedness and resiliency of local communities.



You don't have to be a physician to become a Medical Reserve Corps volunteer. Our volunteers include a wide variety of individuals with diverse backgrounds.

Who Can Volunteer?

- Practicing, retired, or otherwise employed medical professionals including physicians, nurses, emergency medical technicians, pharmacists, nurse assistants and others
- Community members without medical training are needed to assist with administrative and essential support functions
- Public health professionals.



Join us!

We invite you to join the Pinellas County MRC, preregister and be ready to assist our community. Your help is truly needed. **You can make a difference!** You can register online at www.servfl.com or call 727-820-4125 for more information.

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